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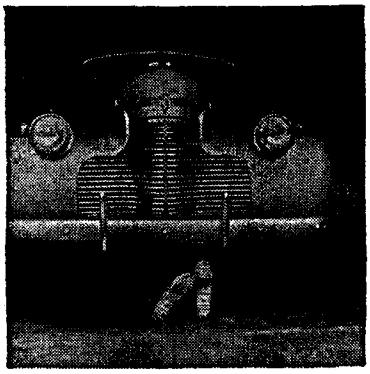

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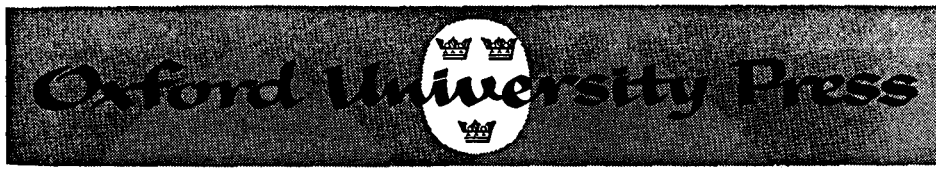

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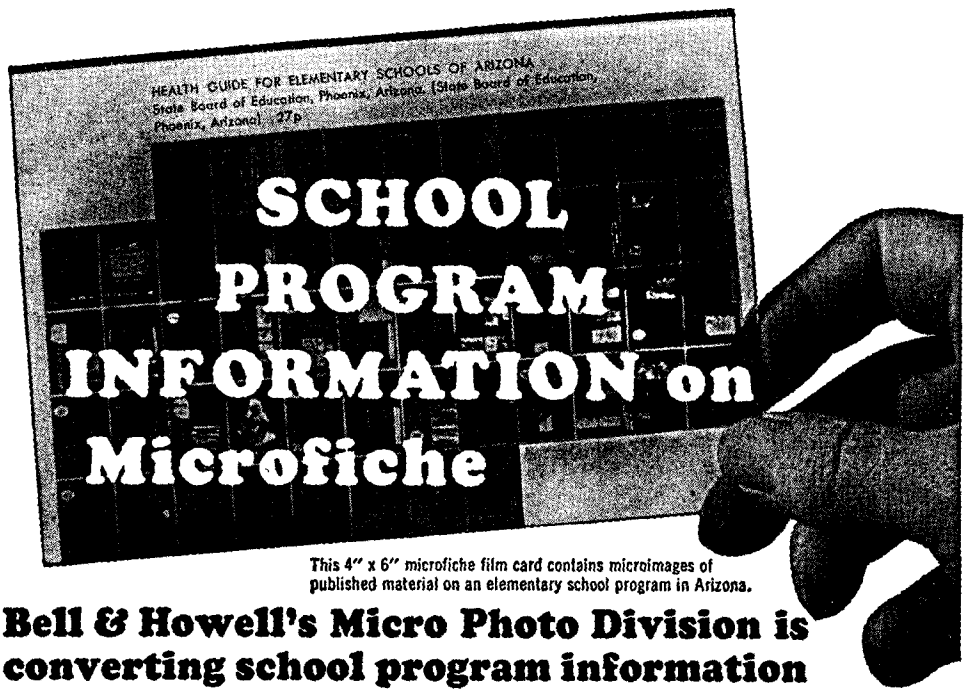

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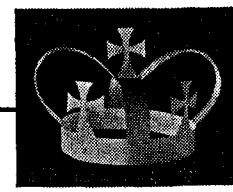
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If You Don't Mind My Saying So . . . . . .

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

Last summer my wife and I spent five months in France, much of the time holed up in one of the least disturbed of the tiny medieval villages that dot the Maritime Alps. Three years before, we had gone around the world in the company of a generous friend and in considerably fewer than eighty days. Such displacements are too commonplace to provide an excuse for many travelers' tales, but one does usually return with a few hundred feet of home movies to be inflicted upon barely polite friends. What follows is something of much the same sort.

We might begin with a shot of almost any European highway or city street, but I choose Cannes because it happens to be only thirty miles or so from my tranquil village. Those of us who are accustomed to think of American traffic as crowded and dangerous can hardly believe our eyes. A few years ago it was said that one out of every seven French drivers had killed someone, and it is surprising that the rate is not higher—as perhaps by now it is. One would have guessed that the automotive psychosis would be more violent in our own country than anywhere else, but that is far from being the case. No attempt is made here to limit the tendency that is everywhere visible for motorcars to take over both the city and the country and to assume that their needs come before any others. In the long stretch of Cannes's seafront Croisette there is not a single traffic light, and if there are any traffic patrols I have never seen one—although I have seen a racing car weaving at sixty miles an hour in and out of the other crowded and speeding cars.

As for the numerous pedestrians who must cross this speedway to get from the beachwalk to the town, they are merely tolerated and must look out for themselves. It is true that there are yellow-striped passages here and there that are supposed to give them the right of way, but woe to him who assumes that it will be granted. For one thing, unless the nearest car is some distance away it would be impossible for it to stop, and in practice the pedestrians must congregate at these points and wait (often for a long time) until some short gap in the triple line of speeding cars makes it possible for them to dash frantically across. Watching them I have been reminded of chickens in a Mexican village scattering before an onrushing bus. The pedestrian is now a third-class citizen disfranchised and deprived of his rights. If there will probably be no peasant revolt, that is because most of these pedestrians are, on other days, or at other hours, transformed into motorists and will exercise the motorist's prerogative as arrogantly as though they had never been pedestrians. They will do as they have been done by.

As for the drivers, they kill one another as exuberantly as they kill the outlawed pedestrian. When they collide without killing all the occupants in one or both of the cars, the survivors show an increasing tendency (as the newspapers are persistently noting) to come to blows, sometimes only with fists, sometimes with knives or that equally dangerous weapon, the easily detachable spike-heeled shoe by the use of which the driver's female companion attempts to give the *coup de grace* to his op-

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ponent. That this motor madness is a psychosis is recognized. But since by some curious twist all modern societies assume that the motorist (perhaps it is rather the motorcar itself) may not be in any way restricted, nothing is done about it.

I have driven an automobile for fifty years and owned one for forty-five. Like most of my fellow citizens, I would hardly know how to do without this means of transportation although, unlike the majority of my fellows, I have never thought of it as anything more than simply that. But that we are paying a tremendous price for it becomes every day more evident. The highways, overpasses and cloverleaves use up more and more of the countryside; parking lots and garages occupy more and more of the scarce city areas; and junkyards piled high with the debris left after the increasing number of wrecks disfigure the outskirts. And, of course, the air we breathe is poisoned. Obviously, the automobile is riding mankind, not vice versa. But we are told that our economy would collapse if people did not buy more and more, larger and larger, faster and faster, and more and more expensive cars. If one's own car is a convenience everybody else's is a nuisance.

Now let us move out to my village only a few miles away. It is officially in the Department of the Var, but geographically it is on a hilltop in the Maritime Alps. It first comes into history in 49 B.C. when the Romans conducted water from the nearby stream to an already existing village. During the late classical, the dark, the medieval and the renaissance days, it was repeatedly colonized and repeatedly depopulated by wars, pestilence, and probably by the attacks of the Mediterranean pirates from whom the hillside site gave some protection. The new church which now serves the community was built in the thirteenth century, but there are standing ruins of the vault of an older one that goes back to the tenth. There are also some still standing walls of the house occupied by the medieval lord of the manor. But the oldest now inhabited houses are said to go back to the twelfth century, although there are others probably not older than the fifteenth or sixteenth. On a clear day you can see from the large public square the Mediterranean and in it the two islands on the nearest of which the Man in the Iron Mask was once confined. Swallows build under the tiles of the red roofs, and in the fields beyond the cuckoos call incessantly. The hillsides round about are strewn with limestone fragments and are cut up into small fields separated by literally miles of dry walls representing a labor that the New England builders of similar works might have hesitated to face. The mayor, who is also the local historian, tells me that they represent the work of several centuries; the most recent were built in the sixteenth.

During the eighteenth century there were as many as a thousand inhabitants but there are now only about a hundred and fifty, and the village rests in a tranquillity that is no doubt near to, but nevertheless not quite, stagnation. The cash income of many of the inhabitants is probably below that of an American sharecropper, but they do not consider themselves poor folk—probably less because of what we would call their standard of living than because, after the French fashion, many of them own little patches of land in addition to the houses they live in. Some of the latter have no "conveniences" whatever. Water is drawn at public taps or fountains, clothes washed at long outdoor troughs. But many of the citizens keep a few chickens, cultivate garden patches sometimes several miles from their home, collect linden leaves to sell for the infusions that old-fashioned people in the cities still drink, or in a few cases grow lavender for the perfumeries of Grasse not many miles away. There is a one-class school for the few remarkably clean and well-behaved children. Electricity is available for those who want or can afford it and the community has installed a TV set in one of the many unoccupied buildings. A sign on the door says that those who take advantage of it in wintertime are requested to bring one stick of wood to contribute to the fireplace.

I know how easy it is to idealize the simple life and to assume that the cheerful poor are more content with their lot than

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they actually are. In certain respects the simple life is more complicated than that which is highly organized. But there is no doubt that there is a tension, a frenzy, even, in Cannes, as in most large cities, which the inhabitants take for granted unless they happen to live for a while in a village like this where it does not exist. Here most of the inhabitants have little and must spend an enormous amount of time in tasks that the city man has somehow done for him. And yet, if they do not have more leisure, they at least move at a more leisurely pace, and they seem less driven by the desire to get ahead, perhaps just because they do not see how they could possibly do so. And perhaps it is because there are so few people here that they are almost invariably cheerful and polite to strangers whom they seem to welcome, not, like most city dwellers, to resent. I suppose that the young people have a tendency to drift away. The older—and some of the young—would not on the other hand, I think, want to change their way of life.

I would certainly not want to live permanently in Mons, not even with the special comforts and privileges I enjoyed there. I am not saying that this is the good life —I am merely wondering if there is not some feasible happy medium between it and the stresses that go along with our developed technology and our overpopulation, if there is no choice between stagnation and frenzy.

Why do the Cannoise drive at such insane speeds from one place to another while most of the Monsoins stay so tranquilly put? Are the former victims of a death wish or is the explanation, as I am inclined to think, less melodramatic but equally sinister? Can it be that they rush madly from one place to another because there is nowhere they really want to be and because they can conceal this dreadful fact from themselves only by seeming to be terribly eager to get to whatever temporary destination they have invented for themselves. And can it be that the inhabitants of Mons remain quietly in their village because that is precisely where they do, genuinely, want to be?

To proceed from, say, Paris to Hong Kong by slow stages is to grow gradually accustomed to the change. To leave the Georges V and within a very short time to find oneself face-to-face with the incredible boat slum in Hong Kong is to be jolted into a very keen realization of the differences possible to the human condition. Travelers who pride themselves on their sophistication often look down upon those who employ guides. But a really good one, like our Chow-Chow in Hong Kong, does a great deal more than merely point out the sights. He bridges the gap between the spectator and the spectacle. Nothing that I saw in Hong Kong seemed to me more significant than Chow-Chow's reply when we expressed some sympathy with the long hours of labor that both he and his wife submitted to. "I want to work; I do not care to be entertained." Or than a proverb that I heard from him (attributed, of course, to Confucius) which was alone worth going around the world to hear: "The local ginger is never hot."

Now comes a shot of a movie theater in Tokyo. The huge, lurid poster advertises *The Sands of Iwo Jima.* But how, I asked the highly intelligent woman guide, do the Japanese feel about that? Why, she replied, they have no partisan feeling at all. The war belongs to a past that has been wiped away.

"What did you do during the war?"

"I had just finished college when it began. I spent the years working in an ammunition factory and practicing how to stab Americans with a bamboo spear."

"How do you feel about the bomb?"

"Strange as it may seem, it was a kind of blessing. We had been told that if we were invaded we must all be prepared to die to the last man and the last woman fighting in the streets. We were prepared to do just that. Only something inconceivable and overwhelming could have changed such a resolution. We could hardly believe our ears when the Emperor advised us to surrender. Now we are very glad that we did."

Obviously, not all Japanese feel that way. Was our guide merely telling us what we would like to hear? I do not think so. She

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did not seem given to that kind of diplomacy.

I have saved for the last three shots which I consider the best. Two made on the plane journey, one during the recent visit to Cannes.

The first is a brief glimpse of nighttime Beirut where it is disturbing to see that the neon tube has learned to write the sinuous Arabic script. Scene two is a street in the modern section of Damascus. A few feet ahead of me are a man and his wife with two small children, each of the children holding the hand of one parent. All are dressed in modern European clothes and might be mistaken for any upper-middle-class American and his family practicing togetherness on a Sunday morning. But as I pass the group and risk a backward glance I see that the wife is, despite her otherwise quite Western outfit, wearing the long, opaque veil from her eyes to below the chin.

Now comes a bit of montage of which I am particularly proud—we cut to a few feet taken this past summer on the Croisette at Cannes down which parades a good-looking young woman in what is now called a monokini—which coinage, although likely to offend the purist, both is convenient and will probably delight the descriptive etymologist with its seeming assumption that the bi of bikini means "two."

I have, on various occasions, indicated my resistance to many of the relativisms now current. But I must admit that the modest and the immodest seem to be almost entirely a matter of the mores, and just how much of what part of the female anatomy may decently be exposed is purely a matter of habit, sometimes easily modified and sometimes stubbornly persisted in. By strollers in Damascus, however much they may be in other respects Europeanized, it must obviously seem that for a woman to appear without a veil is simply to walk naked in the streets. In Europe, on the other hand, custom has changed so rapidly that within my memory the Sennett bathing girls in knee-length skirts and black cotton stockings were pleasantly shocking and purely theatrical since no woman bathed in such a costume. Today the scantiest of bikinis not only are acceptable to those who wear them but not usually disapproved of by parents who had found the Sennett girls quite risqué.

Yet each innovation is for a short time often vigorously denounced or even forbidden. The young lady of the Croisette was presently spotted by two gendarmes who seized her by the arms and legs and carried her kicking into a building to whose back door a Black Maria presently drew up. From the newspaper I learned that she was fined three hundred francs—a pretty stiff penalty in a country even less inclined than ours to inflict punishments and where, for instance, a few weeks later a drunkard who had killed his father was given a suspended sentence.

It seemed a ridiculous fuss to make over the exposure of a few inches (although I admit they are rather eventful inches) of the female torso, almost all the rest of which is by now perfectly familiar to even the most puritanical bachelor. If a modest woman, as Hamlet maintained, will not bare her beauties to either the sun or the moon, then why should the face—surely the most individual and most easily recognizable as well as the most intimate part of the body—not be the most carefully veiled against the gaze of the casual stranger. Is it not as likely as any other feature to provoke a man to that lust of the eye which, so Scripture says, is already an adultery? And if one unveils the face, just where does reason stop and licentiousness begin? Although I have a certain hankering after absolutes, I do not know where to find one in this area of either morals or aesthetics.

In the editorial in the Spring issue it was erroneously stated that Vision 65 was sponsored by the International Center for the Communication Arts and Sciences. Vision 65 was, rather, sponsored by the International Center for the Typographic Arts in cooperation with the School of Fine Arts, Southern Illinois University.

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Science and the Unexpected Universe

LOREN EISELEY

A BRITISH ESSAYIST OF DISTINCTION, H. J. Massingham, once remarked perceptively that woods nowadays are haunted not by ghosts, but by a silence and man-made desolation which might well take terrifying material forms. There is nothing like a stalled train in a marsh to promote such reflections—particularly if one has been transported just beyond the environs of a great city and set down in some nether world that seems to partake both of nature before man came and the residue of what will exist after him. It was night when my train halted, but a kind of flame-wreathed landscape attended by shadowy figures could be glimpsed from the window.

After a time, with a companion, I descended and strolled forward to explore this curious region. It turned out to be a perpetually burning city dump, contributing its miasmas and choking vapors to the murky sky above the city. Amidst the tended flames of this inferno I approached one of the grimy attendants who was forking over the rubbish. In the background other shadows, official and unofficial, were similarly engaged. For a moment I had the insubstantial feeling that must exist on the borders of hell, where everything, wavering among heat waves, is transported to another dimension. One could imagine ragged and distorted souls grubbed over by scavengers for what might usefully survive.

I stood in silence watching this great burning. Sodden papers were being forked into the flames and after a while it crossed my mind that this was perhaps the place where last year's lace valentines had gone, along with old Christmas trees, and the beds I had slept on in childhood.

"I suppose you get everything here," I ventured to the grimy attendant.

✪ LOREN EISELEY, University Professor of Anthropology and the History of Science at the University of Pennsylvania, presented this essay as the Fifth Annual Grady Gammage Memorial Lecture at Arizona State University, on February 8, 1966.

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He nodded indifferently and drew a heavy glove across his face. His eyes were red-rimmed from the fire. Perhaps they were red anyhow.

"Know what?" He swept a hand outward toward the flames. "No," I confessed.

"Babies," he growled in my ear. "Even dead babies sometimes turn up. From there." He gestured contemptuously toward the city and hoisted an indistinguishable mass upon his fork. I stepped back from the flare of light but it was only part of an old radio cabinet. Out of it had once come voices and music and laughter, perhaps from the twenties. And where were the voices traveling now? I looked at the dangling fragments of wire. They reminded me of something, but the engine bell sounded.

I made a parting gesture. Around me in the gloom dark shapes worked ceaselessly at the dampened fires. My eyes were growing accustomed to their light.

"We get it all," the dump philosopher repeated. "Just give it time to travel, we get it all."

"Be seeing you," I said irrelevantly. "Good luck."

Back in my train seat the flames and the dangling wire rose up unwillingly in memory. It had something to do with an air crash years ago and the identification of the dead. Anthropologists get strange assignments. I put the matter out of my mind as I always do, but I dozed and it came back: the box with the dangling wires. I had once fitted a seared and broken skull-cap over a dead man's brains and I had thought, peering into the scorched and mangled skull vault, it is like a beautiful, irreparably broken machine, like something consciously made to be used, and now where are the voices and the music?

"We get it all," a dark figure said in my dream. I sighed and the figure in the murk faded into the clicking of the wheels.

One can think just so much, but the archaeologist is awake to memories of the dead cultures sleeping around us, to our destiny and to the nature of the universe we profess to inhabit. I would speak of these things not as a wise man, with scientific certitude, but from a place outside, in the role, shall we say, of a city dump philosopher. Nor is this a strained figure of speech. The archaeolo-

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gist is the last grubber among things mortal. He puts not men, but civilizations, to bed, and passes upon them final judgments. He finds, if imprinted upon clay, both our grocery bills and the hymns to our gods. Or he uncovers, as I once did in a mountain cavern, the skeleton of a cradled child, supplied, in the pathos of our mortality, with the carefully "killed" tools whose shadowy counterparts were intended to serve a tiny infant through the vicissitudes it would encounter beyond the dark curtain of death. Infinite care had been lavished upon objects that did not equate with the child's ability to use them in this life. Was his spirit expected to grow to manhood, or had this final projection of bereaved parental care thrust into the night, in desperate anxiety, all that an impoverished and simple culture could provide where human affection could not follow?

In a comparable but more abstract way the modern mind, the scientific mind, concerned as it is with the imponderable mysteries of existence, has sought to equip oncoming generations with certain mental weapons against the terrors of ignorance. Protectively, as in the case of the dead child bundled in a cave, science has proclaimed a universe whose laws are open to discovery and, above all, in the words of one of its greatest exponents, Francis Bacon, it has sought "not to imagine or suppose, but to *discover* what nature does or may be made to do."

To discover what nature does, however, two primary restrictions are laid upon a finite creature: he must extrapolate his laws from what exists in his or his society's moment of time and, in addition, he is limited by what his senses can tell him of the surrounding world. Later, technology may provide for the extension of those senses, as in the case of the microscope and telescope. Nevertheless the same eye or ear with which we are naturally endowed must, in the end, interpret the data derived from such extensions of sight or hearing. Moreover, science since the thirteenth century has clung to the dictum of William of Ockham that hypotheses must not be multiplied excessively; that the world, in essence, is always simple, not complicated, and its secrets accessible to men of astute and sufficiently penetrating intellect. Ironically, it is in the time of our greatest intellectual and technological tri-

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umphs that one is forced to say that Ockham's long-honored precepts, however well they have served man in the reduction of superstition, and in the mastery of his environment, are, from another view, merely a more sophisticated projection of his desire for order—and for the ability to control, understand and manipulate his world.

All of these intentions are commendable enough, but perhaps we would approach them more humbly and within a greater frame of reference if we were to recognize what Massingham sensed as lying latent in his wood, or what John Donne implied over three centuries ago when he wrote:

> I am rebegot
> of absence, darknesse, death:
> Things which are not.

Donne had recognized that behind visible nature lurks an invisible and procreant void from whose incomprehensible magnitude we can only recoil. That void has haunted me ever since I handled the shattered calvarium that a few hours before had contained, in microcosmic dimensions, a similar lurking potency.

Some years previously I had written a little book of essays in which I had narrated how time had become natural in our thinking and I had gone on to speak likewise of life and man. In the end, however, I had been forced to ask How Natural is Natural—a subject that raised the hackles of some of my scientifically inclined colleagues who confused the achievements of their disciplines with certitude on a cosmic scale. My very question thus implied an ill-concealed heresy. That heresy it is my intent to pursue further. It will involve us, not in the denigration of science, but rather in a farther stretch of the imagination as we approach those distant and wooded boundaries of thought where, in the words of the old fairy tale, the fox and the hare say goodnight to each other. It is here that predictability ceases and the unimaginable begins—or, as a final heretical suspicion, we might ask ourselves whether our own little planetary fragment of the cosmos has all along concealed a mocking refusal to comply totally with human conceptions of order and secure prediction.

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The world contains, for all its seeming regularity, a series of surprises resembling those that in childhood terrorized us by erupting on springs from closed boxes. The world of primitive man is not dissimilar. Lightning leaps from clouds, something invisible rumbles in the air, the living body, spilling its mysterious red fluid, lies down in a sleep from which it cannot waken. There are night cries in the forest, talking waters, guiding omens, or portents in the fall of a leaf. No longer, as with the animal, can the world be accepted as given. It has to be perceived and consciously thought about, abstracted and considered. The moment one does so one is outside of the natural; objects are each one surrounded with an aura radiating meaning to man alone. It is to a universe already suspected of being woven together by unseen forces that man brings the organizing power of primitive magic. The manikin that is believed to control the macrocosm by some sympathetic connection is already obscurely present in the poppet thrust full of needles by the witch. Crude and imperfect, magic is still man's first conscious abstraction from nature, his first attempt to link disparate objects by some unseen attraction between them.

If we now descend into the early years of modern science we find the world of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries basking comfortably in the conception of the balanced world machine. Newton had established what appeared to be the reign of universal order in the heavens. The planets, indeed the whole cosmic engine, were self-regulatory. This passion for order controlled by a Divinity too vast to be concerned with petty miracle was slowly extended to earth. James Hutton glimpsed, in the long erosion and renewal of the continents by subterranean uplift, a similar "beautiful machine" so arranged that recourse to the "preternatural," or "destructive accident," such as the Mosaic Deluge, was unnecessary to account for the physical features of the planet.

Time had lengthened and through those eons, law, not chaos, reigned. The imprint of fossil raindrops similar to those of today had been discovered upon ancient shores. The marks of fossil ripples were also observable in uncovered strata, and buried trees had absorbed the sunlight of far millennia. The remote past was

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one with the present and, over all, a lawful similarity decreed by a Christian Deity prevailed.

In the animal world, save for the beliefs of a few hesitant thinkers, a similar web of organization was believed to exist. The balanced Newtonian clockwork of the heavens had been transferred to earth and, for a few decades, was destined to prevail in the world of life. Plants and animals would be frozen into their existing shapes, they would compete but not change, for change in this system was basically a denial of law. Hutton's world renewed itself in cycles just as the oscillations observable in the heavens were similarly self-regulatory.

Time was thus law-abiding. It contained no novelty and was self-correcting. It was, as we have indicated, a manifestation of divine law. That law was a comfort to man. The restive world of life fell under the same dominion as the equally restive particles of earth. Organisms oscillated within severely fixed limits. The smallest animalcule in a hay infusion carried a message for man, the joints of an insect assured him of divine attention. "In every nature and every portion of nature which we can descry," wrote William Paley in a book characteristic of the period, "we find attention bestowed upon even the minutest parts. The hinges in the wing of an earwig . . . are as highly wrought as if the creator had nothing else to finish. We see no signs of diminution of care by multiplicity of objects, or distraction of thought by variety. We have no reason to fear, therefore, our being forgotten, or overlooked, or neglected." Written into these lines in scientific guise is the same humanly protective gesture that long ago had heaped skin blankets, bone needles and a carved stick for killing rabbits, into the burial chamber of a child.

This undeviating balance in which life was locked was called "natural government" by the great anatomist John Hunter. It was, in a sense, like the cyclic but undeviating life of the planet earth itself. That vast elemental creature felt the fall of raindrops on its furry hide, was troubled by the drift of autumn leaves or the erosive work of wind throughout eternity. Nevertheless, the accounts of nature were strictly kept. If a continent was depressed at one point, its equivalent arose elsewhere. Whether the item in

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the scale was the weight of a raindrop or a dislodged boulder on a mountainside, a dynamic balance kept the great beast young and flourishing upon its course.

And as it was with earth, so with its inhabitants. "There is an equilibrium kept up among the animals by themselves," Hunter went on to contend. They kept their own numbers pruned and in proportion. Expansion was always kept within bounds. The struggle for existence was recognized before Darwin but it was only as the indefinite sway of a returning pendulum. Life was selected but it was selected for but one purpose: vigor and consistency in appearance. The mutative variant was struck down. What had been was, what would be already existed. As in the case of that great animal the earth, of the living flora and fauna it could be said that there was to be found "no vestige of a beginning,—no prospect of an end." An elemental order lay across granite, sea and shore. Each individual animal peered from age to age out of the same unyielding sockets of bone. Out of no other casements could he stare; the dweller within would see leaf and bird eternally the same. This was the scientific doctrine known as uniformitarianism. It had abolished magic as it had abolished the many changes and shapeshiftings of witch doctors and medieval necromancers. At last the world was genuinely sane under a beneficent Deity. Then came Darwin.

At first he was hailed as another Newton who had discovered the laws of life. It was true that what had once been deemed independent creations, the shells in the collector's cabinet, the flowers pressed into memory books, were now, as in the abandoned magic of the ancient past, once more joined by invisible threads of sympathy and netted together by a common ancestry. The world seemed even more understandable, more natural than natural. The fortuitous had become fashionable and the other face of "natural government" turned out to be creation. Life's pendulum of balance was an illusion.

Behind the staid face of that nature we had worshiped for so long we were unseen shapeshifters. Viewed in the long light of limitless time we were optical illusions whose very identity was

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difficult to fix. Still, there was much talk of progress and perfection. It was only later that we began to realize that what Charles Darwin had introduced into nature was not Newtonian predictability but absolute random novelty. Life was bent, in the phrase of Alfred Russel Wallace, upon "indefinite departure." No living thing, not even man, understood upon what journey he had embarked. Time was no longer cyclic or monotonously repetitious.* It was historic, novel and unreturning. Since that momentous discovery man has, whether he realizes or accepts his fate, been moving in a world of contingent forms.

Even in the supposedly stable universe of matter, as it was viewed by nineteenth-century scientists, new problems constantly appear. The discovery by physicists of antimatter particles having electric charges opposite to those that compose our world and unable to exist in concert with known matter, raises the question of whether, after all, our corner of the universe is representative of the entire potentialities that may exist elsewhere. The existence of antimatter is unaccounted for in present theories of the universe and such peculiarities as the primordial atom and the recently reported noise of the explosion of the birth of the universe, as recorded in the radio spectrum, lead on into unknown paths.

If it were not for the fact that familiarity leads to assumed knowledge we would have to admit that the earth's atmosphere of oxygen appears to be the product of a biological invention, photosynthesis, another random event that took place in archeozoic times. That single "invention," for such it was, determined the entire nature of life on this planet and there is no possibility at present of calling it preordained. Similarly the stepped-up manipulation of chance, in the shape of both mutation and recombination of genetic factors, which is one result of the sexual mechanism, would have been unprophesiable.

The brain of man, that strange green iceberg of conscious and unconscious life, was likewise unpredictable until its appearance. A comparatively short lapse of geological time has evolved a hu-

* For purposes of space I have chosen to ignore the short-lived geological doctrine of the early nineteenth century known as catastrophism, since I have treated it at length elsewhere.

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manity that, beginning in considerable physical diversity, has increasingly converged toward a universal biological similarity marked only by a lingering and insignificant racial differentiation. With the rise of Homo sapiens and the final perfection of the human brain as a manipulator of symbolic thought, the spectrum of man's possible social behavior has widened enormously. What is essentially the same brain biologically can continue to exist in the simple ecological balance of the stone age, or, on the other hand, may produce those enormous inflorescences known as civilizations. These growths seemingly operate under their own laws and take distinct and irreversible pathways. In an analogous way organisms mutate and diverge through adaptive radiation from one or a few original forms.

In the domain of culture man's augmented ability to manipulate abstract ideas and to draw in this fashion enormous latent stores of energy from his brain has led to an intriguing situation: the range of his *possible* behavior is greater and more contradictory than that which can be contained within the compass of a single society, whether tribal or advanced. Thus as man's penetration into the metaphysical and abstract has succeeded, so has his capacity to follow, in the same physical body, a series of tangential roads into the future. Likeness in body has, paradoxically, led to diversity in thought. Thought, in turn, involves such vast institutional involutions as the rise of modern science with its intensified hold upon modern society.

All past civilizations of men have been localized and have had, therefore, the divergent mutative quality to which we have referred. They have offered choices to men. Ideas have been exchanged, along with technological innovations, but never on so vast, overwhelming and single-directed a scale as in the present. Increasingly there is but one way into the future, the technological way. The frightening aspect of this situation lies in the constriction of human choice. Western technology has released irrevocable forces and the "one world" which has been talked about so glibly is frequently a distraught conformity produced by the centripetal forces of Western society. So great is its power over men that any other solution, any other philosophy, is silenced. Men, unknow-

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ingly, and whether for good or ill, are making their last decisions about human destiny. To pursue the biological analogy, it is as though, instead of many adaptive organisms, a single monstrous animal embodied the only organic future of the world.

Archaeology is the science of man's evening, not his midday triumphs. I have spoken of my visit to a flame-wreathed marsh at nightfall. All in it had been substance, matter, trailing wires and old sandwich wrappings, broken toys and iron bedsteads. Yet there was nothing present that science could not reduce into its elements, nothing that was not the product of the urban world whose far-off towers had risen gleaming in the dusk beyond the marsh. There on the city dump had lain the shabby debris of life: the waxen fragment of an old record that had stolen a human heart, wilted flowers amongst smashed beer cans, the castaway knife of a murderer, along with a broken tablespoon. It was all a maze of invisible, floating connections, and would be until the last man perished. These forlorn materials had all been subjected to the dissolving power of the human mind. They had been wrenched from deep veins of rock, boiled in great crucibles and carried miles from their origins. They had assumed shapes which, although material enough, had existed first as blueprints in the profound darkness of a living brain. They had been defined before their existence, named and given shape in the puff of air that we call a word. That word had been evoked in a skull box which, with all its contained powers and lurking paradoxes, has arisen in ways we can only dimly retrace.

A great and oft-quoted scientist is reputed to have once remarked that he refused to believe that God plays at dice with the universe. But as we survey the long backward course of time, it would appear that indeed He does, that the open-endedness of time is unexpectedly an essential element of His creation. Every time an infant is born, the dice, in the shape of genes and enzymes and the intangibles of chance environment, are being rolled again, as when that smoky figure from the fire hissed in my ear the tragedy of the cast-off infants of the city. Each one of us is a statistical impossibility around which hovers a million other lives that were never

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destined to be born—but who, nevertheless, are being unmanifest, a lurking potential in the dark storehouse of the void.

Today in spite of that web of law, that network of forces which the past century sought to string to the ends of the universe, a strange unexpectedness lingers about our world. This change in viewpoint, which has frequently escaped our attention, can be illustrated in the remark of Heinrich Hertz, the great nineteenth-century experimenter in the electromagnetic field. "The most important problem which our conscious knowledge of nature should enable us to solve," Hertz stated, "is the anticipation of future events, so that we may arrange our present affairs in accordance with such anticipation."

There is an attraction about this philosophy which causes it to linger in the lay mind and, as a short-term prospect, in the minds of many scientists and technologists. It implies a tidiness which is infinitely attractive to man, increasingly a homeless orphan lost in the vast abysses of space and time. Hertz's remark seems to offer surcease from uncertainty, power contained, the universe understood, the future apprehended before its emergence. The previous Elizabethan age, by contrast, had often attached to its legal documents a humble obeisance to life's uncertainties expressed in the phrase, "by the mutability of fortune and favor." The men of Shakespeare's century may have known less of science but they knew only too well what unexpected overthrow was implied in the frown of a monarch or a breath of the plague.

The twentieth century, on the other hand, surveys a totally new universe. That our cosmological conceptions bear a relationship to the past is obvious, that some of the power of which Hertz dreamed lies in our hands is all too evident, but never before in human history has the mind soared higher and seen less to cheer its complacency. We have heard much of science as the endless frontier, but we whose immediate ancestors were seekers of gold among great mountains and gloomy forests are easily susceptible to a simplistic conception of the word *frontier* as something conquerable in its totality. We assume, given enough time and expenditure of energy, that the ore will be extracted and the forests computed in board feet of lumber. A tamed wilderness will subject itself to man.

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Not so the wilderness beyond the stars or concealed in the infinitesimal world beneath the atom. Wise reflection will lead us to recognize that we have come upon a different and less conquerable region. Forays across its border already suggest that man's dream of mastering all aspects of Nature takes no account of his limitations in time, space, or even his own senses, augmented though they may be by his technological devices. Even the thought that he can bring to bear upon that frontier is limited in quantity by the number of trained minds that can sustain such an adventure. Ever more expensive grow the tools with which research can be sustained, ever more diverse the social problems which that research, in its technological phase, promotes. To take one single example: who would have dreamed that a tube connecting two lenses of glass would pierce into the swarming depths of our own being, force upon us incredible feats of sanitary engineering, master the plague and create that giant upsurge out of unloosened nature which we call the population explosion?

The Roman Empire is a past event in history, yet by analogy it presents us with a small scale model comparable to the endless frontier of science. A great political and military machine had expanded outward to the limits of the known world. Its lines of communication grew ever more tenuous, taxes rose fantastically, the disaffected and alienated within its borders steadily increased. By the time of the barbarian invasions the vast structure was already dying of inanition. Yet that empire lasted far longer than the world of science has yet endured.

But what of the empire of science? Does not its word leap fast as light, is it not a creator of incalculable wealth, is not space its plaything? Its weapons are monstrous, its eye is capable of peering beyond millions of light years. There is one dubious answer to this buoyant optimism: science is human, it is of human devising and manufacture. It has not prevented war, it has perfected it. It has not abolished cruelty or corruption. It has enabled these abominations to be practiced on a scale unknown before in human history.

Science is a solver of problems, but it is dealing with the limitless, just as, in a cruder way, were the Romans. Solutions to problems create problems; their solutions, in turn, multiply into addi-

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tional problems which escape out of scientific hands like noxious insects into the interstices of the social fabric. The rate of growth is geometric and the vibrations set up can even now be detected in our institutions. This is what the late great biologist D'Arcy Thompson called the evolution of contingency. It is no longer represented by the long, slow turn of world time as the geologist has known it. Contingency has escaped into human hands and flickers unseen behind every whirl of our machines, every pronouncement of political policy.

Each one of us before his death looks back upon a childhood whose ways now seem as remote as those of Rome. "Daddy," the small daughter of a friend of mine recently asked, "tell me how it was in olden days." As my kindly friend groped amidst his classical history, he suddenly realized with a slight shock that his daughter wanted nothing more than an account of his own childhood. It was forty years away and it was already "olden days." "There was a time," he said slowly to the enchanted child, "called the years of the Great Depression. In those years there was a very great deal to eat, but men could not buy it. Little girls were scarcer than now. You see," he said painfully, "their fathers could not afford them and they were not born." He made a half-apologetic gesture to the empty room as if to a gathering of small reproachful ghosts. "There was a monster we never understood called Overproduction. There were," and his voice trailed hopelessly into silence, "so many dragons in that time you could not believe it. And there was a very civilized nation where little girls were taken from their parents..." He could not go on. The eyes from Auschwitz, he told me later, would not permit him.

Recently I passed a cemetery in a particularly bleak countryside. Adjoining the multitude of stark upthrust grey stones was an incongruous row of six transparent telephone booths erected in that spot for reasons best known to the communications industry. Were they placed there for the midnight convenience of the dead, or for the midday visitors who might attempt speech with the silent people beyond the fence? It was difficult to determine, but I thought the episode suggestive of our dilemma.

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An instrument for communication, erected by a powerful unseen intelligence, was at my command, but I suspect, although I was oddly averse to trying, that the wires did not run in the proper direction, and that there was something disconnected or disjointed about the whole endeavor. It was, I fear, symbolic of an unexpected aspect of our universe, a universe that however strung with connecting threads is endowed with an open-ended and perverse quality we shall never completely master. Nature contains that which does not concern us, and has no intention of taking us into its confidence. It may provide us with receiving boxes of white bone as cunning in their way as the wired booths in the cemetery, but, like these, they appear to lack some essential ingredient of genuine connection. As we consider what appears to be the chance emergence of photosynthesis which turns the light of a far star into green leaves, or the creation of the phenomenon of sex which causes the cards at the gaming table of life to be shuffled with increasing frequency and into ever more diverse combinations, it should be plain that nature contains the roiling unrest of a tornado. It is not the self-contained stately palace of the eighteenth-century philosophers, a palace whose doorstep was always in precisely the same position.

From the oscillating universe beating like a gigantic heart, to the puzzling existence of antimatter, order, in a human sense, is at least partially an illusion. Ours, in reality, is the order of a time, and of an insignificant fraction of the cosmos, seen by the limited senses of a finite creature. Behind the appearances, as even one group of primitive philosophers, the Hopi, have grasped, lurks being unmanifest, whose range and number exceeds the real; this is why the unexpected will always confront us; this is why the endless frontier is really endless. This is why the half-formed chaos of the marsh moved me as profoundly as though a new prophetic shape induced by us had risen monstrously from dangling wire and crumpled cardboard.

We are more dangerous than we seem and more potent in our ability to materialize an unexpected which is drawn from our own minds. "Force maketh Nature more violent in the Returne," Francis Bacon had once written. In the end this is her primary

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quality. Her creature man partakes of that essence, and it is well that he consider it in contemplation and not always in action. To the unexpected nature of the universe man owes his being. More than any other living creature he contains unknowingly the shapes and forms of an uncreated future to be drawn from his own substance. The history of this unhappy century should prove a drastic warning of his powers of dissolution even when directed upon himself. Waste, uncertain marshes lie close to reality in our heads. Shapes as yet unevoked had best be left lying amidst those spectral bog lights lest the drifting smoke of dreams, as once it did, merge imperceptibly with the choking real fumes from the ovens of Belsen and Buchenwald.

"It is very unhappy, but too late to be helped," Emerson had noted in his journal, "the discovery we have made that we exist. That discovery is called the Fall of Man. Ever afterwards we suspect our instruments. We have learned that we do not see directly." Wisdom interfused with compassion should be the consequence of that discovery, for at the same moment one aspect of the unexpected universe will have been genuinely revealed. It lies deep hidden in the human heart and not at the peripheries of space. Both the light we seek and the shadows that we fear are projected from within. It is through ourselves that the organic procession pauses, hesitates or renews its journey. "We have learned to ask terrible questions," exclaimed one thinker in the dawn of Victorian science. Perhaps it is just for this that the Unseen Player in the void has rolled his equally terrible dice. It is out of the self-knowledge gained by putting dreadful questions that man achieves his final dignity.

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Yes, John, There Are Teachers on the Faculty

WILLIAM R. HUTCHISON

EDITOR JOHN FISCHER OF *Harper's* not long ago asked the plaintive question whether American university faculties include persons interested in teaching. As he said, the impression is abroad that they do not. "That muffled snarl you hear is the sound of unhappy college students enrolling . . . for the Spring semester." All across academia, as we have now repeatedly been warned in 16-point capitals, self-interested professors are glutting the highways in their Flight From Teaching, while back on the campus the discontent of "cheated students" turns to revolt. Whether one is more distraught about The Plight of the Small College or about The Shame of the Graduate Schools is likely to depend upon which of the large-circulation magazines has arrived in the morning's mail.

Some of the recent jeremiads go so far as to foreclose the possibility of either repentance or salvation. According to this cataclysmic view, the destructive effects of mass education have been such that all efforts to improve the quality of college teaching are "foredoomed to failure." We can never, it is said, reinstate in democratic modern America the favorable educational conditions of those halcyon days when only four percent of our youth attended college. "What is distressing," in the loftily weary words of Professor Andrew Hacker of Cornell, "is that so many students, faculty members, and observers of the educational scene still think that serious reforms are possible."

If attempts at reform are going to distress Professor Hacker, he is in for a good deal of suffering. Although Americans have a

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reputation for discussing their relatively placid national experience in the terminology of crisis, plight and watershed, it is difficult even to get a respectful hearing for the language of cataclysm and utter despair. Most of the educational critics, together with their readers, will continue to propose and expect serious improvements.

Their confidence will be allowable in view both of America's past history and of her present resources. Although our difficulties today may differ in form from those surmounted in earlier periods of American higher education, they are scarcely so alarming as the problems faced—to take one of the milder examples—in the first twenty years of Cornell University. And more recent history gives considerable cause for encouragement. The numerous experimental programs initiated by the Fund for the Advancement of Education and by other foundations in the 1950's have demonstrated the value of honors programs in enriching the curriculum for the ablest students; they have shown in fact that "independent study" and cross-disciplinary courses can be highly valuable to the nonhonors student. Other reformers, such as the leaders of the Danforth Foundation, have sought to combat the harsher effects of that "impersonality" that can be either the greatest strength or the chief weakness of the large-university setting. And student reformers, aided by sensitive leadership from national student organizations, are now bidding fair to provoke in two years more improvements in the training and evaluation of classroom teachers than their elders have implemented in two generations.

Up to now, however, most of the hopeful experimenting admittedly has provided little relief where the shoe is pinching most grievously—in the largest of our universities. Michigan and some others have established "honors colleges"; and the success of these, together with the longer-standing success of similar programs elsewhere, makes it frivolous to talk as though the percentage of American youth engaged in serious intellectual training has been declining. We should be wary, as James A. Perkins has warned, even of desiring to return to some "academic Walden" which may never have existed. Unquestionably, though, the ordinary, able, unspectacular student in the large university is at this moment

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getting less than he has a right to expect; and if he shows a youthful rebelliousness, or never develops an enthusiasm for the enterprise of learning, we should not be too surprised. We have not yet discovered how to transfer some of the known techniques of effective teaching from the relatively benign situation of a few small or very wealthy institutions to the less yielding atmosphere of those large and hard-pressed universities in which the great majority of our students are now enrolled.

Even here, Mr. Fischer's kind of plea, for all its stridency, that something must be done, will continue to be more persuasive than Professor Hacker's advice that nothing can be. But what, precisely, can be done? The answer currently most popular, because it seems so uncomplicated and offers such identifiable villains and heroes, is that we can curtail "research." We can insist that professors stay on campus and teach their students. We can increase the rewards for good teaching, and can encourage the students to help us expose bad teaching.

The net effect of two years' public clamor along these lines may turn out to be positive; yet the usual antiresearch argument is enfeebled for any useful function by its grave misunderstandings of the educational scene. In fact, if there is an award this year for the slogan that has most confused the public dialogue, "publish or perish" should be in the running. This phrase, originated years ago by wronged academics to explain the personnel policies of American universities, has now been taken up by press and public as the quick answer to what is wrong with teaching. Even the judicious Mr. Fischer can repeat the canard that "no faculty member (with rare exceptions) is rewarded if he teaches well, or punished if he doesn't."

Inferior teaching is not going to be corrected by diagnoses that are even more inferior; and the antiresearch diagnosis applies remotely, if at all, in the case of ninety-five percent of our institutions. Some two thousand of the twenty-one hundred colleges and universities could scarcely be staffed at all if appointment, retention and promotion depended upon quantity of scholarly production. These institutions make little attempt to insist upon publication, although promotion may well be more rapid for the ablest scholars and slower for those who publish nothing. As the dean of

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an excellent municipal college put it: "When a department's recommendation of a member for tenure is supported by publication, it goes through; when it isn't, we talk about it." The talk may end in firing; but far more frequently, provided the candidate is a good teacher, it ends only in a year's or two years' delay in his promotion to permanent status.

Nor does the "publish or perish" explanation of things serve very well for those large and leading institutions to which the critics are chiefly referring. The criteria actively in use in these institutions do include good teaching and do involve qualitative standards for judging achievement in research and writing. The list of "mere teachers" passed over for places in the most prestigious universities is indeed long and honorable; but so is the list of producing scholars sent packing by leading academic departments. That there are many posts for which "only producing scholars need apply" is perfectly true. A graduate institution that aspires to train research workers and writers as well as teachers must be staffed, if possible, by persons with experience in all of those areas. But this does not mean that the merely quantitative "producers" are the ones most likely to succeed in their applications. Deans and department chairmen in these institutions can confirm, by showing who has been hired and who fired over a period of years, that the rewards for mere busyness in producing undistinguished research are about on a par with the rewards for a shallow popularity in the lecture hall. In both cases, superficial work undoubtedly is rewarded more often than it should be, but it is rewarded far less often than the current stereotype would suggest.

One of the problems about our public dialogue in this area is that the public has been trained to think of research as an occupation that may be glowingly successful or may be a shameless boondoggle, but in either case is quite inessential to the main business. "The business of teachers," as the saying goes, "is to teach!" ("Dammit!" normally is added.)

The academics so far have offered little response. The usual answer from that quarter makes research sound like an intellectual sauna bath, a way of keeping the tired academic mind in trim. Rarely do the defenders mention more concrete connections be-

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tween research and teaching, perhaps because these are too obvious. The fact is that no very vital instruction of any kind can be carried on without scholarly books and the studies and monographs that undergird them. And this is as true in the more recondite fields as it is in Current Events or Engineering: one is not likely to be able to teach about ancient China with only the books of the 1920's, any more than one could teach geology or physics with only the books and charts of the 1920's.

If the scholarly work must be done and synthesized, it is reasonable to ask who should sponsor this work if not, primarily, the universities. Many complaints about the usurpations of research in the university program seem to harbor an assumption that all that sort of thing should be sponsored by the Rockefeller Foundation and the Sloan-Kettering Institute, so that the universities could be left free for something quite separate called teaching. Under such a dispensation, the students who are now allegedly "in revolt" because they see so little of the well-known Dr. X—and see so much of his graduate assistants—would presumably be contented. They would have neither Dr. X nor his graduate students, all of whom would be over at Sloan-Kettering doing cancer research.

We should be cautious, however, about accepting the premise —so surely and impressionistically asserted—that students are getting inferior teaching from the more "productive" of their mentors. There is, first of all, the rankling fear that even the best students may misjudge the teachers who will mean most to them. (George Bancroft in 1820 gave a low rating to Professor Hegel at Berlin, and to the entire faculty at a depersonalized university called Göttingen.) But we should also ask whether the students actually are turning up the good scholar/bad teacher syndrome with a regularity that would suggest any correlation at all.

The responses to my own very preliminary inquiries at institutions where student evaluations have been running for as many as thirty years suggest that we should look carefully at any alleged negative correlation. If research activities have really been doing more harm than good to classroom teaching, the student surveys and student recommendations for good teaching awards do not seem to show it. Most of the respondents to my inquiry in fact

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shared the view of Dean Pearson of Bennington, who commented as follows on Bennington's thirty-year experience with student ratings: "The overwhelming evidence is that those faculty members who rate highest with the students are the most productive scholars in their field. There are exceptions of course, but there is no doubt whatever of the predominant tendency."

None of my respondents leaned toward an opposite view. And none of the several studies, from 1929 to the present, which have touched upon this matter, has supported an opposite view. More work is needed on the relations between effectiveness in research and effectiveness in teaching; but unless the evidence changes drastically colleges like Bennington will continue to feel justified, when they must choose between two teachers of equal merit, in betting on the long-range teaching effectiveness of the more productive scholar. And surely it will not be ridiculous for the leading universities to demand that their permanent positions be held by good teachers who are also conducting research of high quality. Bear in mind that the aspirant for tenure, unless he can be induced to commit murder or seduce his undergraduates—and even that may not be enough to oust him—is going to be around for life. His appointment in all probability precludes any other in the same field for thirty years.

In the sponsoring of research, just as in an investment in the work of businessmen or lawyers, risks are high and wastage inevitable. In spite of all efforts to discourage frivolous or opportunistic work, we shall probably continue to have bad briefs, wasted business trips and useless scholarly articles. But returns may easily be proportional to risk. While a classroom teacher, with luck, will exert a useful influence upon several dozens of students in a year's time, one first-rate book will affect thousands directly, and will have incalculable effects through the other works that it stimulates. The pressure on academics to bring out unripe works of scholarship can be real enough, and damaging; but the corrective does not lie in devoting fewer resources to research. What is needed is a deployment of funds—and incentives—that will encourage the long-range effort and discourage the potboiler.

The antiresearch arguments, therefore, deserve a less central

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place than the one they have enjoyed in the current debates over the quality of college teaching. The positive ideas that usually have accompanied them are certainly in order—the various proposals made by Mr. Fischer and others for the better training, auditing and rewarding of classroom teachers, and for condemning the disdain-for-teaching pose as the peculiarly bad joke that it is. Yet without more fundamental reforms in the structure of our academic life, large doses of such good intentions will go down like the pep pills the students take to keep themselves awake, and will have exhilarating effects of about the same duration. The current "revolt" will achieve little unless it can manage to unseat two tyrannous habits which have been criticized repeatedly but are still saucily in power. The first of these is the lecture-course approach to learning, the second what may be called, with some understatement, the seven-ring semester.

Despite patient advocacy and convincing results, in recent years, from the champions of "independent study," the prevailing motto in our universities continues to be *Nihil Sine Orationibus:* "If you haven't had a lecture course in it, you haven't learned it." Most departments therefore attempt to offer lecture courses in all fields in which their undergraduate and graduate students are expected to develop a competence. This in turn means, in all but the most fully staffed universities, that the departments must sponsor lectures not just on those subjects in which their members are specialists, but on all subjects of which any member has any knowledge. What is more, the lecturer on any subject is generally expected to "cover" it, not just to speak on that portion he knows best.

Breadth in a teacher is of course much to be admired, and a well-trained scholar can usefully teach elementary courses, guide reading, or even supervise graduate research in fields outside his speciality. The scholar in ancient or medieval history may conceivably "keep up," in a rough sort of way, in such fields as modern European history. But by and large the teacher who attempts to give forty lectures a semester on a subject not his own is wasting a vast deal of everyone's time. No matter how able, he does not have the expertise to write lectures that in any significant way go beyond what the students can read in the most readily

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available textbook. If he is good enough he can vivify this or any subject by his personality, but even so his talents are not being used to best advantage. All the vividness, moreover, may depart from him if he is asked, as are younger scholars everywhere, to change fields every time an area is—God forbid—not "covered."

Even the omnicompetent and the inexhaustible are usually giving too many lectures per week to do their students much good. It is not uncommon for clergymen to feel that one twenty-minute sermon deserves two days' preparation. Academic lecturers, working with less divine and no secretarial assistance, probably should not inflict fifty minutes of scholarly material upon their students without equivalent preparation. Teachers, like ministers, may be forced to use old lectures without revising them (revising can easily take one day per lecture), but surely this is not something our system should encourage. The common practice, therefore, of requiring college teachers to give from six to fifteen public lectures per week is a way of insisting upon mediocre performance.

Whatever other teaching and advising he does, both in his specialty and outside it, the college professor should be running no more than one lecture course at a time; and the student should be making proportionately greater use of the supervised and tested reading list as an educational device. Then, instead of forcing the lecturer, as we now do, to summarize what is available in the libraries and bookstores, we might insist that he give lectures that his colleagues as well as his students would attend because these lectures would represent the outthrust of his scholarship—his exploration of new ideas or bringing together of older ones. Lecturing of this kind admittedly could become too specialized for the undergraduate student, but this need not be the case. The teacher, given time to prepare, can also find time to know what his students have read and can keep in communication with them.

The viciousness of the bad-teaching cycle becomes more obvious when one observes the current textbook market. The kind of "coverage" provided in lecture courses is available not just in one text but sometimes—as in American history—in more than thirty substantially identical texts, almost any of which will do

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for introductory purposes. Nowhere, probably, do we have more wastage per cubic foot of scholar than in the devotion of vast quantities of "research" time to the rewriting of textual materials and the rearranging of documents. Each publisher, of course, yearns to have his very own—and, as the blurbs say, "unique"—edition of virtually the same book. Computers could do this endless reshuffling very well, and sometimes would do it more honestly; but the scholar has to waste his time on it because, frankly, baby needs shoes.

If it is the huge introductory courses in the universities that create this affluent but bizarre situation, one might become curious as to why the students in these courses could not be sent to real books—especially in view of their not being given real lectures. One trouble is that real books demand a reader's time; and in the universities as elsewhere we live in the age of the memo. Students, to a sorry extent, are precluded from real reading because, along with everything else, they must run around to fifteen lectures a week to hear their textbooks summarized.

This brings up the second obstacle to a general improvement of teaching: the seven-ring semester. The principle of the seven-ring semester is that "all types of academic activity must be carried on simultaneously." When institutions change from the semester system to quarters or trimesters, as many have done, or from a five- to a three-course arrangement, they nearly always take along this sacred doctrine and enshrine it in the new calendar.

The fundamental dogma is that the student must be kept off balance by having his time atomized as much as possible. His resources must be divided not only among a number of courses and their requirements, but between long-range and short-range obligations, and between the curricular and the extracurricular. If the academic terms are shortened, then the student must be made to attend more lectures per week in each course. Under no conditions must he be allowed to cease his frenzied activity and concentrate on any one thing until a few days before the final examination—if then.

At first blush, "independent study" seems the answer to

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this foolishness, both for the professor and for the student. But independent study programs, designed in part to free the time of teachers, have often confounded their sponsors by eating up more faculty energies than do the regular procedures. The smaller or richer institutions can sponsor these programs anyway, and have done so, much to the profit of their students. But few institutions of any size have managed to allow more than a pitiful two weeks' "reading period" at the end of a frenetic semester.

The student's long-range work of reading important books, writing papers, and preparing for examinations should have more than two weeks of his uncluttered time. Whether he takes three courses or five, it would be far better for him if, after an eight-week term of lectures and discussions and quizzes, his classroom commitments were sharply reduced; he should spend the next seven or eight weeks fulfilling requirements of reading, research and examination for which counseling help would be steadily available.

We are scared to death to do anything like this; and our reasons are those both of the Calvinist and of the cost accountant. American students, we say, are too naughty and immature to be trusted with this kind of freedom. They just wouldn't do the work. More alarmingly, they would go home, or to Bermuda, and would not pay the freight in the dormitories. In such objections we have a further large field for discussion about the quality of the American undergraduate—both as he is and as he might be if we expected more of him. But for present purposes let us assume the worst about the American student. Where such must be assumed, the requirements in the form of reading lists and papers and examinations must be correspondingly rigorous. And since, on the cost-accounting side of our lives, we do need to keep the dormitories full, students under such a system might have to contract for their dormitory space for a year or a half year at a time, just as they do now.

Americans are also concerned, of course, about full utilization of classrooms. The college building in America is considered the counterpart of the factory, where utilization must be maximized, rather than of the church, in which we tolerate some under-use for the sake of higher utilities. But our univer-

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sities, under the kind of plan suggested here, could provide for "independent study" and still, if they feel they must, maintain full classroom utilization. At any given time in the academic year, roughly half of the university community—both student and faculty—would be engaged in the lecture-course and seminar kind of work, while the other half would be engaged in the duties associated with "independent study." Classrooms and laboratories could, if necessary, be constantly in use by one group or the other.

Doubters will be certain that this plan, with its "supervision of independent study," would require prodigious amounts of faculty time and therefore be unworkable. My figuring does not support this. At a large state university, I taught, with the help of graduate assistants, two lecture courses totalling three hundred and fifty students. Had we, after seven weeks, discontinued lectures and discussions, and sent the students off with reading lists, my assistants and I, without increasing our working time, would have had some five hundred man-hours at our disposal over the following eight weeks. This would have been enough not only for the reading of papers and examinations, but for three individual counseling sessions for each student during the eight-week period. If a student's independent work in two areas can be consolidated, or if the advisees can be seen in groups, the time available for supervision under such a plan can be considerably increased.

The traditional lecture-course method and the fragmented academic program, both widely accepted as necessary evils, are really unnecessary evils; but they cannot be stamped out separately. Or so the experience of the last two decades has seemed to demonstrate. Without the release of the professor from most of his formal lecturing, "independent study" can never be properly supervised for more than a small elite of students. Without a willingness—at least sometimes—to let the student concentrate his efforts, a quarter or trimester system solves no problem more basic than an undergraduate's yearning for a carefree Christmas.

But, put together, calendar reform and the deflating of the lecture system might place even the most crowded universities in a position to demand good teaching and high student performance. Details must vary widely, but the key figure is a teacher

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who gives two—or at most three—eight-week courses of lectures per year. During each of the eight-week terms in which he is lecturing, he is also conducting seminars or discussion groups.

During the terms in which he is not a lecturer, his entire teaching time is given over to those activities that the professor now must crowd into office hours and spare moments: the prescription of reading lists, the setting and reading of major examinations, and the counseling of students on their research topics. If his students, or some of them, require constant incentive and supervision, then their tests and reports are spaced out through the term instead of being concentrated at the end. But neither the professor nor his assistants are running seminars and tutorials; they have had eight weeks in which to lay the bibliographical and other foundations for what the student is now doing.

During this same "reading term," the professor's nonteaching time goes to his own research and to his coming lectures. They are closely allied. If he is any good, he is being given a chance to show it, and his students will have no impression that his research somehow cheats them of the benefits of his teaching.

This ideal-sounding teacher and scholar is, fortunately, not missing from the academic scene even today. The scandalously generalized nature of recent criticism makes it especially important to affirm that models for schemes like the foregoing are scattered all through American higher education. But we could ensure that more teachers, on more faculties, would represent the type. This in turn would help assure that higher education, which survived when Americans were poorer and more ignorant, can adjust to conditions of high literacy and affluence.

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Departure of W. H. Auden

FRED CHAPPELL

He fumbles in his mind for the correct passport,
And steps idly back, looking
Precisely upon his watch. He jingles
His business suit. Is there anything
He has forgotten? He regrets only landscapes
That now he'll never greet friendly again.

He would like a drink. He'd like to have brought
A novel. The boredom of another border
Looms huger than dying. His face
Is grave and waiting. He pats all his pockets,

And notices his doing it
And begins to muse and stands bemused
In his mind while his body drifts forward to departure.

In the wind the ashen crowd has gathered
To watch his leaving, but no one waves,
Or thinks to wave.

FRED CHAPPELL has contributed poems, stories and articles to various literary and popular magazines. He is the author of the novel, *It Is Time, Lord.*

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Protestant Transformations

ERNEST WERNER

THE PUFFED-UP RELIGIOSITY ("Puff Graham") that pervaded America following World War II has turned up, lately, a dark underside of despair. Or should we say rather, at last? For this religiosity has been all along a camouflage for rapid devastations in the faith or far-reaching transformations that have been called everything else except that, including reformation, a reassuring word that stirs the Protestant mind to the depth of its clichés.

Except for the Vatican Council, now concluded, a person would be hard put to name the issues or locate the controversy in our contemporary reformation, alleged. Yet the absurdity passes because transformation is such a detested idea. It robs religion of its familiar contents by showing us that its imageries are obsolete, its symbols symbolic. After intense belief, we feel cheated in the exchange.

A disquieting feature in the present phase (1965-66) is a half-uneasy, bewildered Protestant inertia toward a new religious sponsorship of the ugliest blasphemy invented, surely, since the inception of the Christian faith, Nietzsche's horrifying myth of the death of God. Once a desecration, it has become lately the table talk of optimistic theologians. Following the *Christian Century*'s publication in 1965 of articles by Thomas J. J. Altizer and William Hamilton, the discussion has been broadcast through every mass medium, saturating the public with reports of our scabcrop meditations.

The instability and tittering embarrassment that distinguishes the Protestant mood bobs up uncertainly in certain popular titles, beginning with famous, best-selling Bishop Robinson's naughty caper in *Honest to God*. The book is a scintillating confession

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of unbelief and elicits from a rather ingenuous, bull-voiced divine a reply called sublimely, *For Christ's Sake!* When our sobersides American Bishop Pike decides after reading Robinson's manuscript to revise one of his own and publish *A Time for Christian Candor,* however, nobody laughs. Pike has long been wrapping his misgivings in the idiom of Madison Avenue to remind churchmen that people are not about to buy the whole package. True enough, for Christian candor in its tardy course escorts us to the catacombs of our faith whence a ratty Pop-art theology scurries out to squeal of Nietzsche in a gospel supposed to resuscitate Lazarus. Inside, the spectators are rapt in contemplation of a mystery play called, *Waiting for Godot.* Those who dislike the morbid business, cheery folk who want the lighter side, or Christian merriment, will turn to another fantastic best seller, *The Gospel According to Peanuts,* issued first in paperback but available now in the permanent library edition.

It was in quite another mood that a young man named Gabriel Vahanian had thrust the Nietzschean ugliness upon the public as the title of his first book, published in 1961. I well remember how this obscenity by a churchman disturbed me, a minister. After all, he was advertising our secret. He'd breached the heavy fortifications in the neoorthodox confidence (he had earlier translated a work by Karl Barth) in this first open excursion into Protestant despair. Unfortunately, he muffled his anguish in a difficult, abstractionist prose in which he described his vision of a Christendom that had brought forth a culture ironically incapable of God. Besides making heavy demands on the reader, he put people off by his unconcealed contempt for a spurious Christian religiosity. Then at the last moment he wavered, trembled, doubted, believed. There remained the awkward title. Should one ask for the book in a whisper? Fearlessly? "Have you *The Death of God!*" Should one presume to ask at all?

Times change. All this past winter long the American skies have been filled with a fine gray powdery ash of unrecognized blasphemy. Like the Japanese fishermen aboard the *Lucky Dragon,* none, or few, possibly, are clearly of a mind to wonder if this might be a foretaste of the blind apocalypse.

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Old Mrs.Tanner, *dear* Mrs. Tanner, stops me on the street, mostly bewildered but also disapproving, incredulous. She's heard a college audience on TV, chanting, "God is dead! God is dead!"

Simone, a nurse, and Paul drop in for coffee. She's heard it on the radio at the hospital. What? "Were you shocked?" I wanted to know the answer to that question. "Yes," she said, "I was shocked to hear anyone say it publicly. I wasn't shocked by the idea." Not shocked by the idea? Here we begin to touch the secret reason that this obscenity has been publicized so widely. It is no longer obscene. Yet weeks after I had reviewed Vahanian's book for a college magazine, it drove me into a nightlong nightmare of the death of God, from which I woke up appalled. His Christian indecision, and particularly the moral candor and fine intelligence of his descriptions, had transmitted the authentic Nietzschean shock.

Former parishioners bring me a clipping from the New York *Times,* reporting the movement shortly after William Hamilton's bland acknowledgment of the death of God in the October 6 *Christian Century,* which had carried Altizer last July. Although mentioning Paul van Buren, author of *The Secular Meaning of the Gospel,* the *Times* report omits mention of Dr. Vahanian.

Still another couple stop by to tell me of a local Quaker meeting where the question arose, followed to its feet by two learned Quakers, each holding doctor's degrees, each affirming that this ugly myth means no more than that we outgrow our childhood's beliefs. We are clearly remote, then, from blasphemy, remoter still from Vahanian's indictment of religiosity and his strange religious belief in the rottenness of a culture incapable of God. One sermon title wisecracks, *That Was the God That Was,* and the little cry of pain caused by Nietzsche's needle pricking the eye of belief is smothered by a loud TV. The stark Nietzschean question raises eyebrows when it leers openly from a local Methodist bulletin board, promising also a sermon. Our family magazines carry us through Eastertide. Despair remains an initiate's secret, still.

This brings us back to *Waiting for Godot.* I have called it a mystery play because of its mysterious role in the promulgation of the death of God corrosion, again, first through Gabriel Vahan-

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ian, who has published poems in French and whose second book, *Wait Without Idols,* combines religious and literary studies. His religious interpretation of Beckett's play appeared in the January 1957 *Theology Today* and adumbrates a cluster of associated ideas that are to reappear, pale echoes, now, newly illustrated and profoundly anonymous, in the writings of a theologian who shall likewise remain anonymous, a self-designated theologian of the death of God.

It is Vahanian's article to which we are indebted for the conjunction of the idea of a long frustrated *awaiting* with the idea of the *death* of God, and for introducing in connection with the Nietzschean blasphemy crucial ideas of God's absence and his irrelevance to our problems. He cites Auden and Sartre. To him we owe, also in this connection, the first naked expressions of revulsion toward a Christian religiosity and toward a rottenness threatening culture. Also, significantly, Vahanian had put forward the idea, which has since served as the program of the movement, that "man is essentially religious and that he will keep on waiting for Godot even if he does not believe in God any longer . . ."

In the year 1961, when *The Death of God* appeared, another book was published by William Hamilton called *The New Essence of Christianity.* Hamilton is sharply distinguished from Vahanian by his refusal to attack religiosity, although he does not fail to mention, occasionally, how the churches seem to be going to pieces. His footnote analyzing *Waiting for Godot* shows clearly two or possibly three resemblances to Vahanian's critique, but without mentioning Vahanian, and on the page following, amid talk of God's absence, of a kind of presence, and of our waiting, we find a passage from Auden. It is, however, a *different* passage, and in this same chapter, we find a different Sartre, Camus. It is the same Beckett, the same *Waiting for Godot,* and essentially religious. Hamilton is still ambivalent about the death of God, now uses it, now rejects it, now speaks noncommittally about "belief *in a time* of the death of God," prompting a pertinent question, which he obligingly asks, "Just what do we mean when we say this?" It is only after Vahanian has flashed his title in our eyes that Hamilton is to affirm, definitely, that God is dead.

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Knowing as I do Professor Hamilton's reputation for conscience, I think this cluster of resemblances must be pure coincidence. And it is interesting to see how long the *gestalt* persists, as if the pattern were as fatal as the God it enclosed. Hamilton will write in the spring of 1965, "Waiting here refers to the whole experience I have called 'the death of God,' including the attack on religion. . ." These words could be a perfect epitome of Vahanian's 1957 article, if only Hamilton had read it! Further, "Thus we wait, we try out new words, we pray for God to return. . ." God is nevertheless affirmed to be *dead.* The prayer to the *dead* God for his return is religious enough to remind us of Vahanian in 1957: "Man is essentially religious and . . . he will keep on waiting for Godot even if he does not believe in God. . ." (Hamilton has elsewhere previously admitted that the theologian does *not* believe in God.) On the same page from which these two quotations are taken, as if in reply to our unspoken wonderments, but startlingly, going as it were beyond the usual boundaries of familiar devotion, like those starved medieval nuns who phrased their adorations to the Lord erotically, Hamilton says flippantly, "But we do more than *play the waiting game. . .*" For God? Or for Godot?

Hamilton has discovered a similar imagery in the writings of Dr. Altizer, a third among these disparate names. Considering that Hamilton has been influenced by Tillich, he might also have stressed Tillich's sermon, *Waiting,* a profound sermon published half a decade before the first French production of *Godot.* Instead, he compliments Dr. Altizer writing in the spring of 1965. "I am in full sympathy with much of the mystical imagery used by Altizer, perhaps most of all with the idea of 'waiting.' " Mystical? Dr. Altizer graciously returns the compliment in October 1965. "Nor can the Christian join a Simone Weil in waiting for God." Like every good religious symbol, according to Tillich, the waiting game is getting to be, I suppose, transparent.

Dr. Altizer is far more diversely indebted than Professor Hamilton, who derives subtly from Vahanian, from Paul Tillich, and from Dietrich Bonhoeffer, an underground German pastor-theologian who all but abandoned God for worldliness in prison

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before being removed to concentration camp. It is Bonhoeffer who introduces a Jesus pathos to this irreligious worldliness, desiring to join, mystically, the suffering, broken, impotent yet saving Jesus found amid the world's broken, impotent lives. In contrast, Dr. Altizer arrived toward the Nietzschean awareness, he intimates, under the influence of the comparative religionist, Mircea Eliade. Altizer's confusions are independently his own. There is comparatively little point in trying to refute a writer so abundant in contradiction that on every other page he very nearly refutes himself.

Thus, he urges us to *will* the death of God, Nietzsche-like, but thoughtfully (possibly out of regard for a once-splendid reputation) mentions the Incarnation, which he interprets as a divine *kenosis,* or self-emptying, giving that classic doctrine a novel twist. He proclaims the death of God and finds Christ, if for no good reason, newly manifest in the event. Not any recognizable Christ, however. The warning is out as of 1965: "He [Jesus] may never again appear in a form that is in continuity with his previous expressions." Every intelligible Christianity is plunged into hopeless, geologic night, and in the dearth of other acceptable images, Altizer slides by with one of his own, mentioning "the Christ who lies upon our horizon." What John Taylor has called God's "lively corpse" peers, nevertheless, through Altizer's metaphors. Once it had been God reconciling the world to himself. Now, oddly—God's dead—it is his Word that reconciles. Altizer seems to rely on the Jungian idea of a symbol in which *contradictions* are reconciled, for they rarely impede him. Hamilton praises Altizer's "impressive, helpful, and profoundly important article" in which he argues against a fashionable Christian radicalism that, for purposes of criticism, *distinguishes* Christendom, Christianity and church. Hardly have his praises died away than Altizer eludes us with the new revelation that "it would be nothing less than blasphemy . . . to *identify* the church with Christendom." We must avoid blasphemy. It is as nothing to such a dialectical mind to recognize, radically, that Nietzsche was a *Christian* thinker who had grasped the necessity of a *theological* atheism, redeeming the drab view of him as a once-Christian atheist who saw no necessity

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in theology. According to *Time,* Altizer came suddenly to the conclusion that God is dead for modern society, in the library at Chicago University's Divinity School in 1955, seventy-three years after the publication of Nietzsche's *The Gay Science.*

The crux of interconnection between important modern theology and the death of God corrosion is thickly tangled, indeed. Each of the three main figures in *Honest to God* casts a long evening shadow toward the Nietzschean myth. Paul Tillich does so by interpreting the Gospel symbolically. Then Rudolph Bultmann does, by his impossible wish that the Gospel, a myth, ought to be demythologized. (For what happens to a myth, a story, if you convert it into something unmythic? Where does a candle flame go when it's out?) Finally, the heroic Dietrich Bonhoeffer casts an evening shadow by his ideas of a religionless Christianity, of doing without God, of a world come of age, and, as aforesaid, of joining the mysterious Jesus found amid the world's suffering people. "The truth is," he wrote in a letter from prison, "we've given up worshipping everything, even idols. In fact, we are absolute nihilists." The first person plural refers in context to modern people collectively.

Paul Tillich's influence is, however, to use one of his favorite words, decisive, and it has been prematurely underrated although by common consent it is too great to be avoided. Proof of his scope? That among conservative Protestants Tillich has gone home with many Lutherans, that he has exercised strong fascination for the Catholics, and that, oppositely, he has lately been claimed as an antecedent figure for the death of God corrosion. Although distorted and distorting, the scandal has its germ of truth. The voracious Tillich had assimilated everything digestible in his environment, including Nietzsche, depth psychology, Marx, Schleiermacher, Kant, Plato, a long list of philosophers and theologians, German Expressionism, World War I in the trenches and battlefields, and heaven knows what else.

It is Tillich's continual reiteration that religion is thoroughly symbolic that makes him a transformationist. It has destroyed among us the assumption of the Gospel's literal truth and made

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its symbols instead a lens into existence. Following Schleiermacher, who was already struggling against modern unbelief, he interpreted the Gospel contemporaneously and sought to discover an inner connection between culture and religion. This was a source of his attractiveness. But he thereby condemned the Gospel to a fate in which it had to continue to be transformed because symbolism is but little more than downright unbelief.

Let me pause to secure the point. Tillich, fitting very well Altizer's description of a *Christian* theologian who saw the necessity of a *theological* atheism, was no believer. *Contra* Paul Tillich, a symbol is not a belief because a symbol is not believed. In the momentary illumination when you have isolated the symbolic dimension in it, you have already surpassed the popular mental fixity in belief, suddenly transparent, by making religion visionary. Symbolism, we might remember, is sufficiently an unbelieving interpretation of religion to have accommodated the atheist, George Santayana, who called dogma the indigestible stone but saw, too, that these moral symbols did, ultimately, offer a disclosure of existence if they were but symbolically perceived. They forecast accurately enough the physical truth since they originated from the developing material event, in his opinion, yet in the dreamful, frightened creature, man, these moral symbols were liable to breed illusions and soaring above the event, crash into calamitous mistakes. Santayana insisted on keeping the symbols *always* wholly transparent. Spiritually, he preferred to grope his way through episodes of material darkness whenever the symbols flew up too imaginatively into independent beliefs, knowing that he must recover his vision freshly when intelligence had mastered the event.

Therefore, *pro* Dr. Tillich, symbolism is not wholly unbelief because beliefs include symbols that survive our unbelief. Besides being transparent, they seem to have a religious power of being mystically expressive and to show us in the archetype or figure something or other we feel we *believe in,* a revelation from the caves of the hidden world, or self, seen in the revealing symbol exclusively. But a true symbol may still be a false belief, according to Tillich, who in this concession reminds us of Santayana. The

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fact, then, is easily described. Beliefs are not recognized for symbols except by a mind for whom they have already fallen into the eclipse of transformation.

Tillich's vision seems both catholic and liturgical, to me. Since he demanded of Godhead its immediacy in what Norman Mailer has beautifully called the enormous present, and simultaneously its world-encompassing profundity, according to which God is the Ground of all Being, making all further existence, whether a leaf, a diatom, a nebula, a wafer, sacramental, he could not accept the popular belief concerning God and repeatedly attacked God with a boldness often misunderstood. I quote his *Systematic Theology* just this once, Volume I, p. 205: "God does not exist." And the period is in place. It follows that everything said about the Ground of Being has to be uttered in a symbol. You do not, then, put primary emphasis on *believing that* the symbol forecasts the physical truth, mistaking religion for science. You are seized viscerally, grasped in miraculous wonderment by its expressive truth. Tillich's sermons had for many of us exactly that power. Believing in the biblical vision of God is, for him, like experiencing art, music and ecstatic emotion. His repudiation of fundamentalism was astounding and complete. His rejection of any God that could be imagined within a greater environment and so be fitted into a world he supposedly created, usually through an aperture in the sky, was frequently and shockingly made, recalling the visionary Meister Eckhardt, who had said that man beholds God in this very life in the same manner as after this life, or the visionary Augustine, who imagined that all the creatures cried in earth and heaven, in a happy clamor of sacraments, We are not he, but he made us! And then remembered that he had imagined this.

Tillich took up his position in an eons-engrossing transformation in Christianity ("Be not conformed to this world," the Apostle declared, "but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind") and he surrendered his perishing utterance to the unimaginable new. One of his favorite affirmations is the New Being. With a feeling for the height of effective metaphor in a preacher's discourse, consider his sermon called *The Shaking of the Foundations,*

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that not only announces that shaking, ostensibly of complacency in the atomic age, but secures the biblical connection in his enigmatic comment on Isaiah, " 'Earth is split in pieces.' . . . That is the *religious* meaning of the age into which we have entered." Impressively, this collection ends with a sermon on the text, "Behold, I Am Doing a New Thing!"

Nevertheless, the death of God corrosion, an inevitable companion in this transformation of the idea, reveals itself in Tillich's futile effort to use convincingly the idea of Spiritual Presence. Odd, after all, in a man who could write that God does not exist. Odd, considering Tillich's almighty effort to transcend theism with his "God above God." Yet in his latest and weakest sermons, for Tillich was well on in years, and in his third and weakest volume of *Systematic Theology,* Tillich had settled for Spiritual Presence, arising, possibly, from what must have been an early influence in his thinking, Rudolph Otto's *numen praesens.* Otto, another of Schleiermacher's disciples, had, like Tillich, the quality of religious genius, and although critically, Tillich had thoroughly absorbed his classic book, *The Idea of the Holy.* Developing one side of Schleiermacher, the book had had a great many convinced of the uniqueness of the religious experience, of its mysterious authority and its universal, miraculous immediacy, an experience that makes religion profoundly autonomous and that Otto named, *mysterium tremendum.* Wherein the word *tremendum* is suggestive of awe.

The *mysterium tremendum* is not a Something. We may not expect to find definite intellectual contents in it, whether those of the Gospel or of any other developed, actual religion. It has the character of a rich, complex feeling found running through various religious expressions but hedged about with negations. It is going but slightly past Otto's explicit work to suggest that his famous *mysterium tremendum* is nothing else but *God* deprived, or freed, of dogma and recovered to our feelings, adding, however, a delicate qualification: so far as the *mysterium tremendum* is religious at all. This idea, then, is a perfect instance in the transformation of the Protestant understanding of God. Otto's genius was in his richly illustrated, persuasive, visionary, felt, carefully thought out

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expression of the *mysterium tremendum* that neither limits itself to God, nor to any names and words, not because it boasts a freedom from the past but because it refuses the definiteness of any possible future concepts and ideas, all of which Otto refutes in principle by his emphasis on mystic negation. Otto urges God's mystic Nothingness against every idolatry and every religious embarrassment. Well before Tillich he dared, in his words, "by the use of metaphor and symbolic expressions, to make the states of mind we are investigating ring out, as it were, of themselves."

These autonomous states of mind, ecstasies in the *mysterium tremendum,* are nonetheless dubiously religious. For example, the ghastly, ghostly aspect Otto describes in his adjective, *tremendum,* citing a text from *Faust* about *das Ungeheuere* or "weird Portentous" has many intensities, from Ernest Hemingway's desolate feeling about the late at night, *very* intense, to Shakespeare's Puck, whose words are tinged quite perfectly with the mood, and evoke it:

> Now the hungry lion roars,
> And the wolf behowls the moon;
> Whilst the heavy ploughman snores,
> All with weary task fordone.
> Now the wasted brands do glow,
> Whilst the screech-owl, screeching loud,
> Puts the wretch that lies in woe
> In remembrance of a shroud.
> Now it is the time of night
> That the graves, all gaping wide,
> Every one lets forth his sprite,
> In the church-way paths to glide . . .

While the other main aspect of the *mysterium,* the *fascinans,* its wonderfulness, its peace and bliss, finds a sublime illustration in Henri Rousseau's "Sleeping Gypsy"—not overbrimmingly, but precisely sublime. You find it also in such biblical utterances as:

The peace of God that passeth all understanding.

Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee.

Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy.

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W. T. Stace adduces a text from the Upanishads that shows an aspect of Otto's idea:

In the Infinite only is bliss. In the finite there is no bliss.

Then to hammer it down, Otto insists repeatedly that all concepts expressing the *mysterium,* like the word "supernatural," are of a negative, empty character, so that it is the positive feeling of bliss and wonderfulness, or strangeness, peace, miracle, mystery that is known, "and of which the tongue can only stammer brokenly."

These broken stammerings, in ideogram and analogy, in symbols, rather than in conceptual abstractions and ideas, evoke the *mysterium tremendum,* upon which Otto laid, as upon an unshakable foundation, the religious claim to autonomy, to its unique right to existence in its character as religion. In effect, he reclaimed a certain range of experience for religious symbolism. Nor is this atheism, either. For Otto could dare to say that God was both "a subject on His own account" and "the ground and superlative of all that can be thought." He thus establishes religiousness on the almightiness and everlastingness of God shrouded in the smoke of incense and robed in inchoate awe, primordial reverential fear, and visceral rapture:

"So then [he quotes the liturgy for *Yom Kippur*] let Thy fear, O Yahweh our God, come over all Thy creatures, and reverent dread of Thee upon all that Thou hast made."

In Otto's *mysterium tremendum* dogma, baffled in Schleiermacher, went suddenly underground into cultural incognitos and mystic symbols.

Unfortunately, Tillich plunged after Otto in that master's elementary mistake of supposing that the isolated, expressive religious symbol attains its peculiar authority by evoking the *mysterium tremendum* and by nothing further. This is to forget the importance of one holy catholic and apostolic church or, generally, of the liturgical community. For it is really a case of yes-and-no. Yes, these magnificent symbols arouse us unspeakably, but no, they are not independently religious and again, no, they

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do not prove the pureness and mereness of the religious experience. We must first go all the way into the startling conclusion that religious experience does not exist. Does not, because it is an aspect of the *whole* world in its mystery and miracle. If you stop short of that, by the way, you will never rediscover conscience and catholicity in the symbol.

These men discovered that the symbols, writings, sacraments and such of religion, its various implements of expression, do, after all, communicate the awe-filled, fascinating quality of existence that eludes definition. And this makes religion real, as every mystic understands. The converse is not true. It does not make reality religious, as many mystics have likewise perceived. Religious experience does not exist apart from religion in the sense of its being experience at first hand and having immediately a familiar religious character. There is no such thing. It is not a quality in a world of qualities, one flower in a large bouquet. It is, primordially, a quality in the character of the whole world, and but conventionally religious. If Tillich had reached better clarity about this, he would never have settled for the unfortunate phrase, Spiritual Presence. For this experience has vanished along with the Image that supported it, God as an imagined pseudovisible Being conceived inside the environment of the world.

There is no Presence! Of God we must say, Not present, not absent, but only whatever is always Immediate. Whitehead writes, "Thus religious experience cannot be taken as contributing to metaphysics any direct evidence for a personal God in any sense transcendent or creative." The revelation of God is the revelation of the character of the world, but this does not find expression only in the uniqueness of the religious symbol, as Otto and Tillich have thought. If that were the case, it should follow that these symbols must exercise their persuasion over all the members of the secular community in whom we recognize a spirit akin to faith or charity, which is manifestly not the case. The symbols are only conventional, after all.

The scope of their vitality is not the profane community but the liturgical community. Here, we discover at last, these various perplexities, these opacities of doubt, are cleanly resolved. There

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is no such thing as the religious experience except in the liturgical community, or under an influence carried away from that community. (So much in Protestantism is liturgy in decay!) Liturgy *is* the experience, at once wholly conventional and artificial, like a visit to the ballet or a trip to the picture gallery, and radically immediate and comprehensive in our experience. The religious symbol interprets experience, life, self, world: the *mysterium tremendum,* but not something beyond all this. There is nothing beyond the definite expression except a vague potentiality, the Ground, the Abyss, that has not yet leaped into the definite expression: God unspoken and about to speak.

Sacraments are useful archetypes for our religious experience. They give us our direct, immediate experience of the miracle. They express it. They are in that sense archetypes of all our enjoyments. Nothing *indefinitely* exists. The *mysterium tremendum* does not exist unless it happens. The sacrament does not give you God but satisfaction. It is definite expression that has been refined, so to speak, in the atheist void. Fusing the unimaged God of prophetic Judaism, a God of utterance, with the definite icon, bread, wine, water, oil, the laying on of hands, the sacrament gives you God's only nearness. There is nothing else.

Therefore, the liturgical community is the one organ and society of the religious experience which, should it happen elsewhere, derives from that. It is the guardian of the archetypes and the expressions. Rejecting all vain attempts to contrive a new cultus, like that of the French Revolution—"today, pasteboard and filigree, and ending tomorrow in madness and murder" —Emerson spoke an oracle in advance of his time: "Faith makes us, and not we it, and faith makes its own forms."

Liturgical community is the living society of these familiar forms of faith. There is the primordial *mysterium tremendum,* indefinite, vague, seizing us with a shudder or some momentary pang of joy, but beyond that aspect of existence, we have the religious conventions of word and sacrament, considered as activities in the liturgical community. Although these are ordinary conventions like any other, we do well to remind ourselves that perpetuating conventions are founded on radical experience because if they were

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not, they would not perpetuate. Here, then, assisted by the inertia of sacred traditions awaiting the recurrence of miracle and insight, what had been vague and primordial leaps into the daylight definiteness of expression. Liturgical community is the guardian patience of the passion of the Holy Spirit. In it, we find our words and tokens for the miracle. These implements are themselves but signs and vehicles of activity in sacred community. What happens is livingness of utterance and sacred address, or what the Scripture calls Immanu-El.

We must put an end to the myth of a religion that owes no fundamental debt to liturgy. Whenever anyone uses the word "religion" we must steadily insist on getting down to the things it ultimately refers to, the models a person has in mind in using it, the comparisons he implies, and the store from which he borrows gestures and ideas for any further metaphor and application. We must penetrate to the ensemble of his fundamental assumptions, usually, initially, well out of sight. After such penetration one discovers a connection that goes back invariably to liturgical community, goes back in time, goes downward in prephilosophical imaginings, past legends and dreams, past rites into gestures of the body, almost to inadvertence and necessity. Liturgy is the notochord of the myth, religion. It cannot be severed and the myth be alive. Insist if you will that this myth lives and breathes subtly throughout society, where it also further develops. But the myth coheres only in the liturgical circumstance. Liturgy is its active custodian, its instrument for new expression, and when transformations come, as they are coming heavily now, the frame within which they must occur, unless these energies are dissipated into downright irreligion. It is not dictionaries or even philosophers, but liturgical community that keeps our definition of religion, and is the one authority custom always consults for that.

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Weatherman

MILLER WILLIAMS

He was always there
a clumsy-grammared hick with a crooked tie
and we turned him on
the way we scrub before meals
and say grace
when no one clearly needs it but in case
of unlikely plagues
the visitation of demons or an evil eye.

We tolerated his talk of a sky not ours
followed his endless scribbling on the wall
because it's best to be if possible
unsurprised by rain.

The hurricane came
was coming
and only that face
transported out of space to the living glass
could tell us how close it was
when it turned like a mad ghost to the north
and smelled our streets.

On that late September afternoon
when the sky was sagging heavy with sandbags
before the box he was blocked in like a household shrine
we offered him our faith
pledged to buy Pepsi
commended our homes and children
into his hand,
followed the scrawl
he wiggled and tapped across the bright wall
knew there was sense we didn't understand

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were almost sure
by making the marks over the shape of our state
he could conjure the wind back to the water
the water from the land.

We listened believing
and when it fell around us
we rode it out on his words
two and three tight in a dark room
his transistored voice disembodied
the miraculous pictures in the miraculous past.

And when it was gone
after we dragged the fallen tree away
and cleaned the walk
and put the window in
we were a town
of forty thousand people
who had been a worship
and a fear.
He was a man
who kept a ritual
we suffered him
after the news.

✪ MILLER WILLIAMS' poetry, short stories, articles and translations have appeared in a number of quarterlies. His first book of poems, *A Circle of Stone,* was published last year. With John William Corrington he is editor of the forthcoming *Southern Writing in the Sixties.*

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Sea-Figure

MARY H. WEBB

The wisdom of the quiet swollen land
Is genesis and resurrected-death,
A ripple on the cold night-shaded sand
Conceives your face and follows in your breath.
The sea curves in the rhythm of the earth
And burns itself in beauty on your face,
But sea can't comprehend the painful birth
Of formal water in a painted trace.
The art, that's lent to nature in your eyes,
Perceives what lies beneath the crested foam
And plunges deep seas down that you may rise,
Triumphant, from their fernfilled scabrous home.
Beyond the conch shell's sound, you hear the shore
And search beneath the sea's cave-laden floor.

✪ MARY H. WEBB has recently completed a novel. She is a graduate student at the University of Florida and spends most of her time doing civil rights work.

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An Architecture for the Electronic Age

JOHN M. JOHANSEN

MOST OF US FOR SOME TIME have been aware of the field of cybernetics and the vast effects of the current electronic revolution. Norbert Wiener, in his book *The Human Use of Human Beings* (1954), presented these matters most vividly. Since that time electronics has made possible accelerated development of computers for data processing, worldwide communication systems by Telstar, and guidance of weapons and space craft. Already several newspapers have installed computer typesetting; soon we will have three-dimensional TV, and at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology a team is developing a nationwide computer network that will make all knowledge, whether stored or presently recorded, instantly available anywhere. Publishing will almost surely undergo a radical transformation; the book will be replaced by research packages assembled to suit specific needs. The takeover by datamation of traditional methods is borne out by the recent news that the Radio Corporation of America has bought out Random House: a very significant event. In addition, cybernetics has already had its influence on teaching, psychology, language and mathematics.

In each period of well-established cultural achievement, there is apt to be a consistency in the thinking and experience of the arts, science and philosophy. In his book, *Music, History and Ideas,* Hugo Leichtentritt points out that in the seventeenth century,

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for example, as the concept of infinity became widely accepted for the first time in scientific thinking, it was also expressed in the endless vistas of the Baroque painters and sculptors, and in music by the elaborate and boundless developments by composers of the fugue and concerto. Although it may be disputed whether such consistencies in any time were conscious or unconscious, the fact remains that consistencies are indeed found and that for us today there are likely to be similar consistencies. It is with this background in mind that I am prompted, after reading Marshall McLuhan's *Understanding Media,* to examine the new aspects of experience predicated by the electronic revolution, and find their effects, established or predictable, upon our architecture. While certain of our architects who seem not to be aware of the present need reorientation, other architects, who sense the current change, deserve encouragement, reassurance, and a cause around which to rally their valuable talents.

The effects of the electronic age upon architecture may be felt in the following ways:

First, the overwhelming presence of electronic devices will lead to a degree of imitation in the design of our buildings. We witnessed this happening in the 1920's and 1930's when Le Corbusier romanticized and imitated the machine and industrial products. Mies Van der Rohe expresses the industrial processes of rolled steel in the application of standard sections to the facades of his buildings; and Walter Gropius made his great contribution by bringing design talent to manufacturing and building methods. But with the passing of the industrial age, we may now expect an architecture conceived more as a computer, of components rigged on armatures or chassis connected by circulation harnesses. The use itself of electronic terms conjures up new mental pictures of architecture. There should be a new kinetic quality in this manner of assemblage that will be more convincing than buildings that imitated moving mechanical parts yet did not themselves move. Interchangeability of parts with different circuit patterns for various performances may suggest that very different building types, the house, the high-rise office building and the theater, will be assembled of different combinations of the same components or sub-assemblies.

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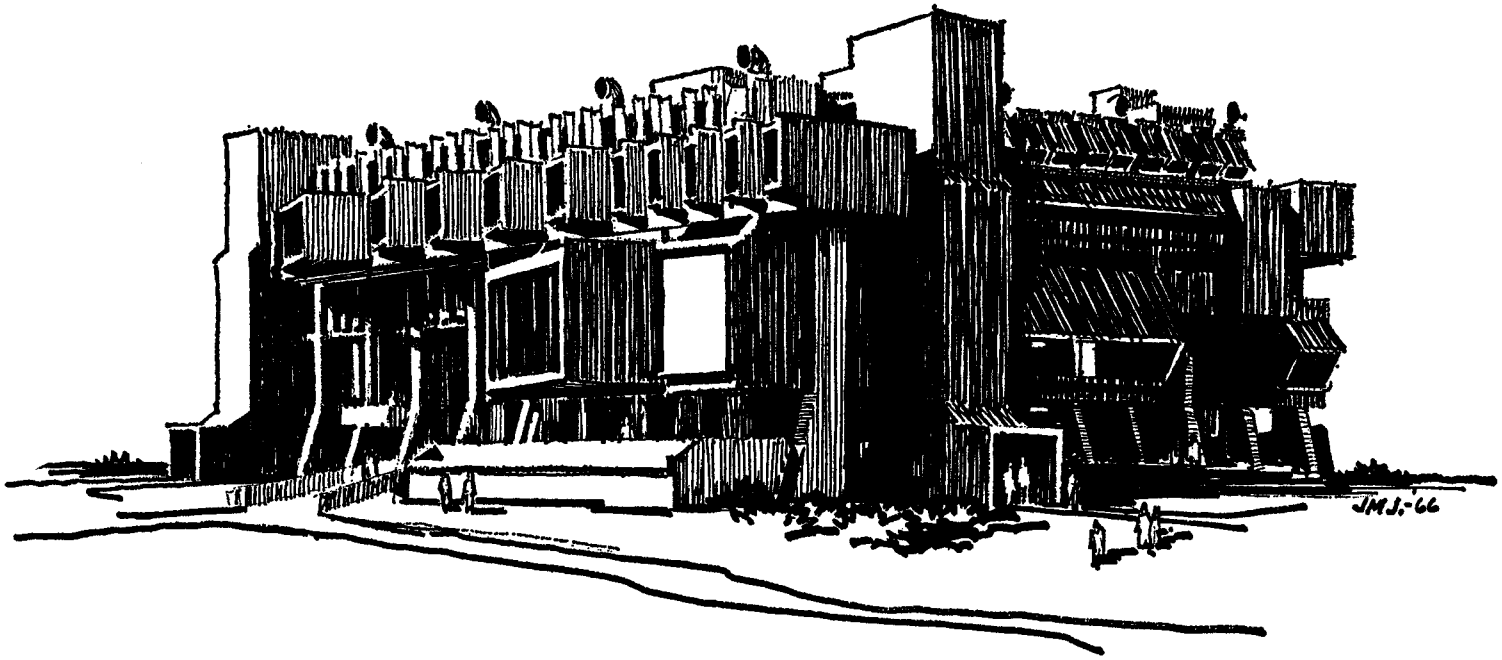

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Habitable chambers may be arranged not for closest physical connection, but according to most practical circuiting. Circuit patterns, whether for public use or mechanical equipment, will be shown vividly coursing through, overlaid or circumventing one another as one now sees them in the rear view of a TV cabinet. Intercommunication systems themselves, although less conspicuous, will be given expression. *Plug-in City,* the science-fiction proposal by Peter Cook in 1964 in England, is certainly a bold effort to state our environment in new terms. In this design, buildings old and new were to be plugged into, or removed, at will from a vast raceway of service conduits providing power, water, sewage and transportation. Here, however, the value of this liberating idea derives from a sense of city organization rather than from imitation. So although this influence through direct imitation may be the most readily apparent visually, it is probably the least significant or valuable.

The second influence will be felt through the use of the computer. Already scaled drawings are made from architectural data. Even perspectives are constructed when a computer is given plan and elevation. However, more influential in the design process will be the instantaneous assembly, organization analysis and conclusion of controlling conditions or determining design factors which can relieve us of endless calculation, research and comparative study. The effect will be to make the building in process of design as malleable as clay, which can be manipulated and recomposed or reorganized before our eyes. The aid then is more in planning; the architect will see alternate solutions of building types, configurations and functional organizations simultaneously and instantaneously, by programming different design data into the computer. This will also free the architect's mind, we hope, for greater aesthetic evaluation and judgment, or intuitive flow of creative ability.

Third, architecture must constantly be thought of in new terms that have force and meaning for us today. Such a term is "Cyborg," which may be defined as the entity resulting from the application of attachments to the human body of any mechanical or electronic device, to extend and enlarge the performance of its

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physical or mental faculties. The computer as an extension of the brain is of course the most revolutionary. But why cannot the buildings we live in be considered "extensions of man"—of their inhabitants? The control of natural or artificial light relieves diaphragm adjustment for the eye. The floor platforms and the elevator assist the legs in setting our position in space. The protective walls and roof supplement the limited and inadequate protection provided by our epidermis. Air conditioning is an addition in extension of the nasal functions of constant air temperature control and of the cilia hairs which filter out dust. The concept of "building and man as Cyborg" may well free our thinking architecturally; the extension of man as grafted or as portable equipment and the more fully equipped building may soon be indistinguishable. Then again, as we can already see in terms of self-opening doors and fully programmed temperature control, the building itself will eventually develop into a sensory organism with feedback and consciousness of its own performance.

A fourth influence will be electronic communication itself used within or between buildings. The telephone obviously has already decentralized cities, administrative and government agencies, and much of light industry. In a similar way, the parts of buildings will be decentralized. As McLuhan says, the implosion due to electronic communication will cause an explosion of population and physical plant. Within the building, rooms and departments will be more loosely assembled, as is already true of one college in the West. It is fully equipped for communications, and can provide one hundred and thirty-six lectures simultaneously at any time at any student study on the campus. This arrangement replaces the lecture halls with dormitory rooms or individual student study cubicles possessing total reception. The library will be metamorphosed into a single computer room with limited staff space, which will receive data from its own tape library or from any other library or fact-storage center; it will select, edit, xerox and transmit written and pictorial material.

Generally then, with proximity of building elements no longer necessary for reasons of communication, the building design will be more loosely conceived. The long conduit will replace the short

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corridor. The new functional configuration will be found to be consistent to or sympathetic with the aesthetic configuration, which for satisfaction of our reconditioned psyche will follow its own process.

However, aside from the planning and organizational aspects of our buildings, the architectural expression is of particular interest and concern. The fifth influence will be the most subtle but the most inevitable of all: that of our reconditioned minds and senses. The architect will undergo—has already partially undergone—a retraining of his perceptive habits, his psyche, his methods of thinking, his language, the relative acuteness of his senses and his aesthetic values. The influence upon him will be partially subliminal, the change in his design partially unconscious. He will produce sooner or later, inevitably, a new architecture.

The sixth and last influence, as I see it, will also be upon aesthetic content, but will be governed by conscious awareness of our changing technology and environment. From what has already been said, it is rather unlikely that a number of the fanciful tacks of current architectural expression will find a place. Historic revival—neoclassic and neobaroque opera houses and museums, neomedieval castles to house factories, neo-Gothic dormitories, and the "'mono-pitch school"—is out-of-date. The air terminal that looks like a bird: the "architecture of imagery" is out-of-date. And since the mechanical age has been replaced by the electronic age, buildings styled after machines are out-of-date. Those who do not derive their forms from the experience of our present environment upon our changing habits of perception are out-of-date. Those who approach architecture from an academic or fine arts or "master work" point of view, the "beauty seekers" and the formalists, have no place. As Wiener observed, a rigid deterministic world has given over to one of contingency and organic incompleteness and probability. We can therefore assume that perfectionism and rationalism are irrelevant. For architects oriented in these directions offer society no interpretation or reconciliation with our technological environment—instead, merely an escape. For, as Mr. McLuhan says, we must first understand our environment if we are to control it.

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In the mechanical age, action and reaction were not closely connected in time, response was slow, involvement limited, consequences of our actions unreal. In the electronic age, action and reaction are almost simultaneous. "We have extended the central nervous system itself in a global embrace, abolishing time and space," writes McLuhan. This separation of action and reaction or consequence formerly meant noninvolvement. Now, with the technological extension of the self including all mankind, we necessarily participate, and in depth, in the consequences of every action. The theater of the absurd dramatizes the dilemma of Western man who appears not to be involved with the consequences of his actions. The electric speed of bringing all social and political functions together in sudden implosion has heightened human awareness to an intense degree; and the partial, specialized or detached point of view will not serve in the electronic age. The "all-inclusive image" prevails. Wholeness, empathy and depth of awareness is of our time.

The images of the electronic world are continuous, simultaneous, nonclassified or noncodified. They run counter to the traditional Platonic compartmentation of ideas and things, and counter to the analytic and rational processes of thought. Images are abstracted and require the viewer's involvement and participation for their complete transference. They represent a continual flow of data, not measured or measurable. This process has been described as a "mosaic" effect of composite impressions producing a total comprehension. Many effects and impressions are absorbed by the viewer instantaneously, involving a fusion of all the senses. The spectator becomes part of the system or process and must supply the connections. He is the screen upon which images are projected. Images as on TV are low definition, therefore require high participation. In this sense, the new experience is anti-"square," since "squares" don't get involved. It is "cool," in that the message is implicit. The new media deal in slang rather than in eloquence, since slang is the outgrowth of firsthand experience and the immediate scene; not restated, refined, edited, but real. No detached point of view, whether of physical position or state of mind, is longer possible.

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Now we may attempt to restate these experiences and attitudes in architectural terms. If we have been reconditioned to an intensely heightened awareness of places and events, the viewer will expect all parts and aspects of buildings to be made known, to be immediately comprehensible, not as a composite impression but as an all-inclusive image. Buildings will reveal themselves totally. They will clearly express their elements, functions and processes. The viewer will identify with them, feel an empathy with them. "Package design" is out-of-date, and there will be a conscious attempt to force an expression of elements and processes to the exterior, or by pulling apart the elements to allow the viewer to see in depth within, possibly to inner buildings. We are not interested in the epidermis or skin, only, but insist on knowing the mesoderm and the endoderm; that is, the bones and internal organs.

Intercommunication systems within the building will further allow the pulling apart of elements, relieving the current prosaic and boring compactness and density in favor of a vastly more interesting form—space composition effected by the multiple impact of many parts.

The "facade" in the traditional sense, no matter how richly sculpted or how irregular or bold, will disappear in favor of separate habitable enclosures posed freely in space. If it can be said at all that there will still be a facade, it will be a composite of all facets of all enclosures, their four walls, roof and soffit. To use Mr. McLuhan's words, it will become a "mosaic" of facades, a bombardment of the eye by many images. Already I find among the drawings of my current designs, not only the four exterior elevations, but many more sheets devoted to the interior elevations; the inward and side-facing facets.

In this heightened human awareness which the viewer will be trained to feel, occupants will not be lost from view when in the building, but their infusion through space will be seen from outside as well as in. Or, if occupants themselves are not in view, the loci of their coursing will be felt by the shaping of the habitable spaces and passages; we will feel in the enclosed forms the loci of their movements.

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The rational, analytic aspects of architecture will give over to a nonclassified accretion of elements in continuous uninterrupted flow without any particular sequence. As modern physics no longer sees a universe in which everything happens precisely according to law, which is compact, tightly organized and in which everything is governed by strict causality, so too, our impressions will not be ordered, controlled or in sequence. Impact will derive from group effects, and on every view, the mosaic of staccato images will present themselves. Views will not be selected or limited, but will include unplanned peripheral sensations; adjacent, oblique, marginal experiences; adjunct images of other functions, structures or mechanics. Perhaps the view of a stairway, for example, will be inseparable in a composite view of other elements, or may itself be purposely broken into multiple images.

As buildings become looser assemblages, less finite and static, they will become volatile, will reach out and fuse with adjoining buildings and lose their identity in a continual froth of spaceform. It would appear that the current concept of the city as one continuous building is borne out. The individual building appears to be many; the campus, neighborhood or city may in fact be one. The total architectural environment, as McLuhan has said, will be a mythological world in which all things are connected in the human mind and experience, as opposed to the Aristotelian classified world of knowledge and exact definition. We are now closer to the flux, continuous currents, coalescence and change of the earlier philosopher Heraclitus. If architectural elements are not defined or codified, recognizable symbols will not be used, and there will be no fixed architectural language.

The experience we derive from our buildings will be drawn from a fusion of the senses: the impact swift, instant, condensed, total; the message immediate, direct, possibly crude, unedited, unrehearsed, but real. Textures of exposed finishes, for example, allow us to feel with our eyes from a distance; or we see with our sense of touch.

Our designs will use architectural slang. Eloquence in architecture, now so much in vogue, will be out. Slang will be used because as in speech, it is direct, vivid, brash, effective, sometimes inge-

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niously poetic, and has always to do with immediacy in time and situation; with firsthand experience. This is indeed typical of modern communications. Architects will make known through their design the fact that they have had immediate participation in "pre-living" their buildings, while occupants will in actual "re-living" read back the firsthand experience. Like the computer, the building has "memory," by which previous conditions can be recalled. The architect will reveal his processes of design, and the contractor's processes of construction—may in fact show the building in stages, even incomplete or unresolved in order to allow the viewer to participate in the processes. This is "cool architecture," that is, low definition, high participation, as in electronic communications today. The viewer is required or encouraged to extend his powers to "make the connection," as McLuhan says; to fill in that additional content which is only implied. Low definition will mean that the architectural expression is implicit, not explicit, understated, not overstated, suggested, not hammered home.

Akin to this characteristic is the coming insistence that the architect and occupants will not be detached from the realities of architecture, in the sense that they will not take a detached or contrived point of view, be it academic, preciously professional, or one of personal isolation. Since we cannot detach ourselves from conditions and events as they really are anywhere on the world—or off—we are in fact there. We no longer will have patience with the hypothetical, the make-believe, the isolated event out of natural context, with sophistries, stunts or mannered poses. Architecturally this would condemn historic revival, literary reference, moralizing, academic or fine arts attitudes.

As electronic communications have made it possible to assume a station point anywhere in time and space, our way of viewing our buildings will change for all time. Not only is the fixed axial reference point of the Renaissance out-of-date, but so also is the "Space Time," or moving, station point conceived by Siegfried Giedion, which might be said to represent the mechanical age of the wheel. Now I would make the observation that we will have a new station point of the electronic age: one that is multiple and

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simultaneous, a "simul-station." Obviously we don't change our physical position within a building as instantaneously as we follow an intercontinental discussion by Telstar. However, we may now be trained to project ourselves into positions, to identify ourselves with many other stations and circumstances. Buildings then will be designed by architects who can project themselves in this way, and for occupants who will easily respond with this same developed faculty of identification in space. Applied literally, any or all station points, fixed positions or loci of moving occupants will be identified and expressed. Rooms or other spaces can be designed to suggest by scale and form, their use; passages, tunnels, bridges, tubes, troughs, arches, platforms can be so vividly expressed as to make us extend ourselves in space, as it were.

Finally, Mr. McLuhan's observation that "the medium is the message" has its parallel in architecture. This simply means that the influence of the vehicle by which the message is sent is greater than that of the message itself. Correspondingly, the building as an instrument of service has greater effect upon our lives than the functional service itself. To any serious architect this is hardly new. We should expect today, however, that this will be recognized more than ever. Further, we can fulfill our social purpose by designing buildings not as "consumer commodities," or as "diet for the privileged," as McLuhan says, but as instruments for explaining and helping all to understand and adjust to our often bewildering environment of rapid technical change. Great and responsible artists and thinkers in all times both have been affected by their technology, and have helped to find a meaning in it for their society. It should certainly be expected of the architect today that he be aware of the vast growth and influence of the electronic revolution, that his perceptive habits be retrained, and that his architecture in turn be a consistent and valid expression of his times.

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POEMS

MARK HEDDEN

Dakota

Ya-Yail: Love; pain; sickness, a wound;
Difficult, laborious.
—Diccionario Motul de Maya-Espanol

So she turns from me.

A dance, of sorts;
Sensed more than said.
But I knew that even as I went
(Take ten long steps) into the continent.

In Dakota, the rain, the distance divides.

In Dakota, the rain, the distances
Fall like luminous stones.

Curious, that by putting this space between us
I have a sense of myself going inside you,
Not away.
It is
Only a thought.

In the nether world make no cry,
Kiss not thy beloved. . .

Difficult to keep what is. . .
Against the urge to possess.

Blue-black magpies fly off a cow's carcass,
Wings button white.
Black, white,
Neither one nor the other.

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Turn and turn again.

My love, recall how the dance is done.
How we walked among trees so red
And you wanted to run.
How I thought roots were sprung from my heels
And held you tight.

In the nether world make no cry,
Kiss not thy beloved
Lest thy cry seize thee.
Cry for her who is lying, who is lying,
Whose body no garment covers.

Inanna

She was not free as we thought
Conned by that ease, the salt
That makes of a moment caprice
Exhilarating as it is brief.

House in the suburbs.
Her wit shot out,
Gun at the head.
Her husband
A dead loss.

She went, stripped, drink in hand,
Russian to the last,
Quiet as snow in Constantinople.

✪ MARK HEDDEN, with the aid of a grant from the Wenner-Gren Foundation, is at present completing a study of petroglyphs from the Columbia River region of Washington.

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De Gaulle vs. Hallstein: Europe Picks Up the Pieces

STUART A. SCHEINGOLD

FOR JUST OVER FIFTEEN YEARS, Germany, France, Italy and the Benelux countries have been engaged in a daring experiment in supranational community building. The surface ebb and flow of the New Europe reported in the daily press results in a rather bizarre public image: on the one hand, a commercial grouping plodding aimlessly along in an aura of European prosperity; on the other, a tenuous political grouping wracked periodically by crises usually sparked by a few well-chosen words from Paris. Consequently, the storm that broke over the European Community last summer had a characteristic familiarity.

In truth, the Community's public image is doubly misleading. It conceals the stable foundations of the New Europe at the same time that it minimizes the gravity of the 1965 crisis. The Common Market, which is the Community's best-known project, rests on a solid substructure of economic accomplishment. These achievements are not the prelude to political integration, but they were possible only because an incipient political union has already been created.

Is this assertion of stability consistent with a crisis reading of last year's events? Or, to put the problem in a more familiar manner: Why was De Gaulle able to shake the Market? Why don't

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the others just refuse to go along? As a matter of fact, France's five partners have been asking themselves these questions ever since President de Gaulle's startling veto of Britain's application for membership in January 1963. Anger and frustration had, by last summer, developed into a festering sore.

In vetoing Britain's application for membership, the French President had been within his legal rights under the E. E. C. Treaty. His action, however, was in cavalier disregard of the prevailing Community spirit of cooperation which calls for composition of differences *in camera*. Britain's application for membership was received as tribute to the irresistible momentum of the New Europe. After more than ten years of dogged resistance, Great Britain had finally decided she'd rather switch than fight. President de Gaulle thus shattered high hopes and a sense of impending triumph. Since 1963, there has been no attempt to repair the breach. Instead, President de Gaulle has made the public ultimatum a standard part of his bargaining technique. Moreover, the feeling has grown that Gaullist techniques have to be resisted if the New Europe is to be saved. "As for Europe, having blocked political integration in the name of national sovereignty and the admission of Britain in the name of political integration . . . he has left the political construction of Europe in an impasse from which it will not emerge so long as he rules, if ever"; thus spake Herbert Lüthy.

Last summer's negotiations for working out the final phase of a Community-wide agricultural program got under way in an unhealthy atmosphere of recrimination amid calls for a showdown with the imperious De Gaulle. By the end of June, France had "walked out" and begun a partial boycott of Community institutions. In the following months as Community officials tried desperately to calm the atmosphere, charges and countercharges were hurled back and forth. One Dutch parliamentarian commented sourly: "De Gaulle belongs in a wax works museum"—an obvious reference to the austere French leader's nineteenth-century concept of nationalism. The President bided his time, but then in a September press conference he demanded that henceforth Community games should be played according to new rules.

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Ironically, the French broadside against the Community attests to its strength. One of the political principles of the French President is not to do public battle with those whom he considers beneath him. He knows that the general tendency of such confrontations is to close the prestige gap. If it had been possible, De Gaulle would certainly have preferred to ignore the Eurocrats. The contempt that he heaped upon the "*apatride,* irresponsible, technocratic word-machine" in Brussels was then a perverse sort of tribute to the staying power of the Schuman-Monnet vision of a Federated Europe and to its materialization in the Common Market.

The fact is that only if one relies on the patently indefensible proposition that economics and politics are separable can it be denied that the Six have already effected a rudimentary political union. Politics is defined not by substance, but by process. No observer can deny that it is by political decisions that governments maintain control of the economy. In this sense, agricultural policy, antitrust regulation and tariff control—to note areas in which the Market has made dramatic strides—are all "political." Since their establishment in 1958, the organs of the Common Market have accumulated a substantial portion of decision-making power. President de Gaulle is determined to stem this flow of power to an "embryonic technocracy . . . which was to trample over French democracy and settle problems crucial to our existence."

The growth of political power in Brussels springs from the *spirit* rather than the words of the Treaty (ratified by the parliaments of the six member nations in 1957) that created the European Economic Community. The provisions of the document are strictly economic: the elimination of customs barriers and the adoption of a unified tariff policy toward third countries; establishment of the freedom of movement of persons, services and capital among the signatories; inauguration of common agricultural and transport policies, *et cetera.* Yet even as the architects were drawing up this blueprint for economic unity, what they had in their minds was the dream of *political* unity.

Political integration had been in the European air since the close of World War II. As early as 1946, at Zurich, Winston

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Churchill was calling for a "United Nations of Europe." As a first, tentative step toward its realization, the Council of Europe failed. Then the successful establishment of the Coal and Steel Community in Luxembourg in 1952 breathed life into the New Europe. But the overly ambitious "grand design"—involving a European Defense Community, a Political Community and an Agricultural Community to go with the Coal and Steel Community—also failed. Today it is clear that the Council of Europe would have been able to promote union only if the member nations had been willing, as a first step, to yield sovereignty. With only the vague and distant fruits of a New Europe as inducement, statesmen were, however, unwilling to sign a blank check. The collapse of the "grand design" also resulted from a premature leap into the sensitive area of defense policy—the French public was not willing to link irretrievably its military destiny with Germany less than ten years after World War II.

The lessons of these failures were very much in the minds of the drafters of the Common Market Treaty. As one prominent member of the French delegation remarked in private conversation: "In Rome in 1957, the wording of the Treaty was carefully chosen to give the impression that the Treaty is *not* a treaty which modifies the national constitutions." They knew that unity could only be purchased a little bit at a time; that, of all commodities, the one any nation was most reluctant to part with was its sovereignty; that, at all stages of integration, there must be a *quid pro quo*. So the designers of the Common Market, sitting down to write their treaty, wiped the word "political" from their vocabulary, and left the whole question of sovereignty deliberately ambiguous. The problem, they told themselves, would resolve itself piecemeal as time passed and specific issues were met. The flag, they told themselves, will follow trade.

While much is thus left unsaid in the Treaty, its spirit is clear—even to attorneys who must treat it as a working instrument rather than an historic document. Last winter a representative sampling of the Community bar was asked what they considered to be the political orientation of the Common Market Treaty. Out of the fifty-three questioned, thirty-four expressed the opinion that

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the Treaty was oriented toward an ultimate federation of Europe; seventeen said the document was so ambiguous they could give no opinion; only two agreed with De Gaulle that the orientation was toward a *Europe des patries*—a European confederation that would leave national sovereignties largely intact.

Still the disparity between what the Common Market Treaty says and what it leaves unsaid has led to a growing conflict—matching European statesmen who are looking forward to the ultimate political federation of the Western continent against those other statesmen, led by De Gaulle, who see the only possible unity in a *Europe des patries*. And it is this ambiguity that opened the way to last year's crisis.

Structurally, the institutions of the European Economic Community are very nearly as Janus-like as the treaty that gave them birth. There is a legislature (the European Parliament) which doesn't legislate; an administrative organ (the Commission) which both initiates legislation and administers it; a cabinet (the Council of Ministers) which is responsible to no one; and a supreme court (the Court of Justice) which is supposed to act as if these glaring weaknesses and strange anomalies didn't exist. To Americans, this complex structure appears a queer hodgepodge of checks and balances that adds up neither to a federated government nor to a traditional international organization like the United Nations. It is not as strong and autonomous as the former, or as weak and dependent as the latter.

The Community's weakest agency is the Parliamentary Assembly—its members being chosen by the national parliaments rather than by popular election. The duties of the European Parliament are mainly consultative. Ironically, the few real powers at its disposal are pointed toward control of the Commission, the wellspring of the integration process, rather than toward the Council, which is the final stronghold of national interest.

The most powerful Community agency is the Council of Ministers, made up of Cabinet Ministers from each of the member governments; as such, it is the repository of the concept of sovereignty. In contrast, the concept of federalism—or, if you will, the commitment to union—is embodied in the nine-man Commission

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whose members, while chosen by their respective governments, function as independent civil servants somewhat in the manner of the Secretariat of the United Nations. The ultimate decision-making power is in the hands of the Council; generally speaking, it is the Commission that proposes and the Council that disposes.

That is the *de jure* relationship between the two organs; *de facto,* as President de Gaulle's assault brought home to us, the Commission has developed into a formidable center of power. In part, the achievement has been due to the tactical mastery of certain of the Commissioners—most notably Germany's Walter Hallstein, President of the Commission, and the Dutch Vice President Sicco Mansholt. The President is lamentably best known in the United States for the moribund but frightfully newsworthy Hallstein Doctrine. Mr. Mansholt is hardly known at all, although it is he who is primarily responsible for the Common Market's most significant achievement to date—the single agricultural program which, despite last summer's crisis, promises to be operational ahead of the schedule established by the Treaty. Lest this achievement be underrated, it is important to recall just how intractable are agricultural politics.

Beyond the question of personnel, the Commission's strength lies in its authority to initiate legislation, and in the complex and technical nature of the problems with which it wrestles. The economic issues that are its almost routine responsibilities are of little interest to the general public, and beyond the experience of most politicians. (It is typical of the nature of the Commission's work that it should have been involved in the long-drawn-out legal disputes over the manufacture and/or distribution of such products as aqueous emulsion of ureaformaldehyde, radio tubes and gingerbread.) The result is that the Commission has acquired power and influence by default, somewhat in the manner that in this country the regulatory commissions—I.C.C., F.T.C., S.E.C., *et cetera*—have accumulated authority far beyond that granted by law. In economic matters and in other technical fields, power is likely to accompany expertise.

Ordinarily, a Commission proposal is delicately balanced, both politically and technically. *Fait accompli* pressure is thus ex-

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erted on the Council, which can, of course, reject the program but is hardly in a position to propose an alternative. But the Council has not in the past been a reluctant partner in integration. The ministers do not put aside their national interests and, as a result, battles in the Council are long and tough. The toll taken by one marathon session has been described by President Hallstein as follows:

> The courage of the ministers should not be underrated—nor, indeed, their endurance. Forty-five separate meetings, 7 of them at night; a total of 137 hours of discussion, with 214 hours in sub-committee; 582,000 pages of documents; 3 heart attacks—the record is staggering.

But the crisis has increasingly become ritualized. As one weary minister claimed after a typically hard session of bargaining: "We are condemned to succeed." They are, in other words, determined to agree; the stalemates characteristic of international politics are out of the question.

Common Market momentum has been gained heretofore by Commission dynamism exploiting this cooperative attitude in the Council of Ministers. In the jargon of the academic Common Marketeers, the Commission has used the *package deal* to exploit the *spillover*. The spillover term coined by Professor Ernst Haas in his pioneering study, *The Uniting of Europe,* suggests that integration is a cumulative process—that each commitment to economic integration leads to further commitments that will ultimately lace the economies of the member states together into an inseparable whole. The packaging of proposals as documented by Leon Lindberg of the University of Wisconsin calls for simultaneous advance in interlocking areas. The Commission's job is to convince a recalcitrant government that its goals *require* otherwise unpalatable steps. The packaging process is thus grounded on the logic of integration—progress through the back door. Moreover, it is in keeping with the intentions of the framers of the Treaty not to engage in any frontal assaults on sovereignty.

In sum, then, there are three pillars of Community power: the technical expertise of the Commission, cooperative attitudes within the Council, and the logic of integration—the building blocks required for construction of the economic project to which

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all the member states, France notwithstanding, are committed. Certainly, the battle that began last summer had its share of the abstruse and technical. At stake was the cost-sharing formula for financing the Community's agricultural policy—involving as it does various kinds of subsidies. In retrospect, it is clear that even in the rancorous atmosphere agreement could have been reached rather easily.

The Commission's package, however, was very loosely tied together and raised nontechnical, highly explosive political issues. The Commission asked that money for financing the program be taken from customs duties collected on agricultural *and industrial* products and that these funds all be put at the disposal of the Commission which would allocate them according to a formula being worked out by the Council. Since it was expected that receipts, under the plan, would exceed expenditures, some of the funds would remain at the disposal of the Commission, giving that body the increase in power and authority that independent financial resources inevitably confer. Creeping still closer to the brink, the Commission added a final proposal: to increase the authority of Parliament so as to enable it to control more effectively an Executive with financial autonomy.

The French President's response was predictable. Under no circumstances is De Gaulle likely to be impressed by the need for enhancing the powers of Parliament—any parliament. Nor is he likely to be impressed by arguments drawn from the store of conventional wisdom about parliamentary democracy. Moreover, in this instance, France and her partners had been engaged in a running five-year controversy over this sticky issue. From the French point of view, the Commission had first claimed unnecessary financial powers for itself and then respectfully requested a further yielding of sovereign prerogative in order to cope with resultant disequilibrium in the Community system. How much easier just to deny the Commission's initial request. It was at this point that France walked out.

Before assessing the consequences of the summer debacle, one question remains to be answered. Why did the usually astute Commission drive headlong into its most humiliating defeat and carry

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the Community to the brink? We've seen the situation as it looked from Paris. What was the view from Brussels?

First, let us recall that the hot winds of revenge were blowing —particularly in Holland where anti-Gaullist feeling is strong. The Dutch were almost as eager as the French for an agricultural agreement, but they have also been the most ardent advocates of just the kind of institutional reform that found its way into the Commission's ill-fated proposal: more power at the center combined with a democratic broadening of the base on which the Community stands. It is to the interest of the Dutch to get Community decisions out of the smoke-filled meeting rooms of the Council. Power politics is not a game well suited to small nations. Better to give the Commission the wherewithal to implement the Treaty to which the Dutch are committed and take one's chances with the checks of parliamentary democracy. The Germans, too, seem interested in strengthening the Parliament, and, in any case, were under pressure from their farmers not to concede to France. In the long run, the Community's agricultural program is destined to put German agriculture out of business—thus opening that market to French farmers.

With the support of the remainder of the Community pretty much assured, the Commission perhaps felt emboldened to do battle with France. The Commission was, it seemed at the time, in a particularly strong bargaining position. At the close of 1965, a change in voting procedure was due. Agreement on agriculture would no longer require a unanimous vote, and France would lose the bargaining leverage assured by its veto power. This "squeeze" technique was written into the Treaty at several points, to impress governments with the diminishing fruits of obstruction. French farmers, anxious to assume the profitable responsibility for meeting a major portion of Europe's agricultural needs, were pressuring the President to consummate the long-promised farm agreement. Consequently, the Commission felt that the French leader would be willing to pay a high price. Finally, the Eurocrats had regularly used the package deal to promote the accretion of Commission power and the steady widening of Community boundaries. It has become something of an article

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of faith. Once De Gaulle got his prized farm policy, however, it would be difficult to get him back into the bargaining vise. The temper of the Commission is most clearly revealed by a statement made in March, 1965, by President Hallstein:

> But from the political angle, any lack of spirit of initiative in the Commission, any lack of creative imagination on its part, would inevitably reduce the Council to a state of semi-paralysis and would halt the progress of the Community.

The Commission was taking a calculated political gamble. Despite denials from Brussels, there is no other way to see the crisis than as a test of strength. The dangers of the course were clear—so clear in fact that President Hallstein encountered firm opposition to his proposal among his fellow commissioners. He was able to win over a majority, but it is traditional that only unanimous proposals are forwarded to the Council. Still, it is unlikely that even the opposition group anticipated the dangerous escalation that finally resulted. Habitual bargaining in an air of ritualized crisis had perhaps lulled the Commission into believing that when all the chips were finally down, differences would somehow be composed for the sake of a goal to which all the partners are committed.

The French Government, however, had been busy planting doubts in the minds of its partners about its support for the Common Market. Talk of the empty chair, boycotts, and alternatives to the E.E.C. has been mixed with the ultimatums that have so angered the other Common Market members. Everybody is convinced of French support for a Community constructed along Gaullist lines. But would the President play the game according to the rules? Would he, when the chips were down, compromise to avoid a negotiating dead end? Nobody could be sure whether his anti-Market talk was real, or simply a Gaullist gambit designed to enhance the French bargaining position. Perhaps misled by the reasonable attitude of the French as negotiations got under way, the Commission elected to consider De Gaulle's numerous and outspoken threats of retaliation as bluff. But the nineteenth-century statesman showed that he could play poker with twentieth-century finesse, and responded to the Commission's

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ploy by raising the stakes with a walkout and a partial boycott. The other players were forced to throw in their cards.

President de Gaulle unequivocally thwarted the Commission's procrustean bid to stretch the logic of integration over a premeditated effort to enhance the autonomy of the Community. Independent revenue was a convenience, not a necessity. The Commission probably would have been given access to proceeds from the agricultural program itself. While these wouldn't have been enough to pay for the cost of the common agricultural policy, payments by governments—geared to need—could have made up the deficit. Moreover, France was willing to accept parallel acceleration of industrial free trade as an appropriate *quid pro quo* for agricultural progress. There was, however, no *need* for tariffs on industrial products to flow into the Brussels coffers. Secondly, Parliamentary control is only a textbook prerequisite for Commission financial power. In the hybrid Community system, the Commission is not a free agent even without Parliamentary pressure. The Council of Ministers is perfectly capable—perhaps too capable—of keeping the Executive in check. The General's opposition to increased Parliamentary and Executive control was clear from the outset, and the Commission's argument about the indivisibility of its package was just not at all tenable.

After months of painful uncertainty, a *modus vivendi* was finally reached in January, and Community wheels are again turning. On substantive matters—agricultural policy, internal tariffs on industrial goods, and the Kennedy Round negotiations—the logjam was broken, and it is reasonable to expect satisfactory resolution of these problems. On more fundamental issues, the struggle has not ended. Indeed, it has only just begun in earnest.

Important institutional conflicts have simply been deferred, not resolved. On the changeover to majority voting, there has been no more than an agreement to disagree. The Treaty has not been amended, but President de Gaulle has put the Community on notice that France will not be voted down on matters of vital national interest. In itself, this is a matter of little consequence, since the Community has always made it a practice to hammer out a consensus rather than impose the rule of the majority. But the Gen-

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eral's tactics have put a severe strain on the cooperative attitudes—the Community spirit—that made agreement possible in the past.

The Community spirit will henceforth be challenged in Council negotiations by the Gaullist spirit—diplomacy as war pursued by other means. Accordingly, the General's determination to undermine the strength of the Commission with personnel changes and institutional adjustments, such as shorter terms and a rotating presidency, is particularly threatening. More than ever, an experienced, vigorous and skillful Commission will be invaluable. Whether or not the Community's executive organ can be protected remains to be seen. The negotiations over majority rule indicate, however, that Gaullist tactics have catalyzed a coalition of "the five" in defense of the Treaty, and the Commission is the likely beneficiary of this solidarity.

Certainly, the crisis has poisoned the atmosphere. Rather than feeling condemned to succeed, proponents of integration seem determined to succeed in spite of condemnation. But technical expertise and the logic of integration are still working in favor of the Community. The Commission will have to play its cards carefully —being satisfied with minimum requirements for a viable Community. Integration will thus proceed more slowly in the future—at least, for as long as Gaullism reigns in Paris. There is, however, no reason to assume that the rules that have already been accepted will not be applied faithfully. Even during the boycott, France continued to participate where application of existing rules was at stake.

Guaranteeing the faithful application of the Treaty, and the regulations enacted under it, is the Court of Justice of the European Communities. Exercising the power of judicial review over all three European Communities—the Coal and Steel Community, the European Atomic Energy Community, as well as the Common Market—the Court has been operating for a dozen years and has handed down over one hundred and fifty decisions. And although it has neither marshals, nor police, nor an army with which to enforce its judgments, none of its rulings have been defied. Since the treaties are in effect the constitutions of the New Europe, a clear and appropriate analogy can be drawn with the

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United States Supreme Court: the Court of Justice is indeed a constitutional court wielding the power of judicial review.

The cases that have come before it vary from attempts by the Coal and Steel Community to make the Ruhr coal industry obey antitrust regulations, to efforts of widows in Holland to force the Dutch government to pay death benefits. The Commission has, for example, successfully employed Court action to force member governments to terminate emergency protective tariffs. In one of the most significant cases, an Italian citizen challenged the nationalization of the Italian electric industry by refusing to pay his electricity bill. He argued that his contract for service had been made with the expropriated Edison Company of Italy, and not with the new national electrical monopoly. His refusal to pay set off a chain reaction that began with a local Italian justice of the peace and went all the way up to the Italian supreme court and—following a parallel path—to the Court of Justice in Luxembourg. While the returns of this case are not yet in, it seems unlikely that the Court can, or will, overturn the Italian decision to nationalize. Even so, the case has already established an important precedent: individual European citizens can—and regularly do—challenge, before the courts of their own countries, national laws that violate the Common Market Treaty. The national courts are then bound to apply the Treaty under the general supervision of the European Court of Justice which will, it seems clear, have the final word.

The connotations of a collective sovereignty overriding national sovereignty are immense. It is as if an Alabama Negro, denied the right to vote by local authority, could appeal his case to the United Nations and thence to the International Court of Justice at The Hague. The work of the Court of Justice thus attests to the vital step forward that has already been taken toward the political integration of Europe. By binding themselves to a set of preestablished rules and procedures for change, the big nations relinquish the coercive power that their size tends to give them, while the small nations yield, at the very least, their right to say no. One is again reminded of the role of our own Supreme Court: the part it has played in integration and in legislative reapportionment graphically illustrates the point.

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The 1965 crisis, thus, leaves behind a viable if shaky Common Market. The Community can protect the sizable gains that it has already made, but can it again go forward? Optimistic forecasts about the future of the New Europe sound more and more like whistling in the dark. Yet without such optimism, will businessmen continue to plan for the "European market"? Will even the committed politicians be willing to defend the interim sacrifices called for in the building of a European Community—one thinks immediately of the German farm bloc?

Happily, there are good reasons to believe that a reasonably cordial atmosphere can be restored. We are all accustomed to thinking of politics as a partisan matter—party against party. Much to the relief of the Eurocrats, the Communities have in general been spared this torment. Only in the early days when the Socialists and trade unionists looked with distrust on the possibility of a Catholic capitalist Europe have the Communities and their policies split the political spectrum along traditionally recognizable lines. While rumblings of discontent over inadequate social responsibility may still be heard on the left, Socialists as well as Christian Democrats now give general support to the New Europe.

Political conflict within the European Communities flows across normal divisions and is thus extremely difficult to classify. Since the Communities are generally considered—rightly or wrongly—to be responsible for the remarkable increase in prosperity, both businessmen and labor leaders support continued progress. The Communities are, in other words, developing within a political environment—well described by George Lichtheim in his book, *The New Europe*—that is nonpartisan, nonideological and strongly technocratic.

The oddity of the whole thing is illustrated by the view of members of Italy's radical right, who look upon the Community as the only available counterweight to the Italian "opening to the Left," which they argue has driven Italy to police state socialism. On the other hand, the German Trade Union Federation has published three editions of a book entitled *European Integration —On the Right Course*. The character of the Community's political base is best exemplified by the makeup of Jean Monnet's in-

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fluential and nonpartisan Action Committee for a United States of Europe which is composed of political leaders of the six member states. This broad political base generated remarkable support for the Community throughout the crisis—particularly in France where the need was, of course, the greatest.

A solid political foundation, thus, exists for progress along the lines spelled out by the Treaty. With respect to progress in the realm that Harvard University's Stanley Hoffmann refers to as high politics, the Community will have to be patient, and everyone knows just exactly what is being awaited. Even the General has assured us that he is mortal. In the face of Gaullist intransigence, this is the course that has been supported, at least implicitly, by Belgium's committed European, Paul Henri Spaak. There were, however, the impatient politicos who acted on the premise that Lord Keynes had said the final word on the long run. These hawks are now one crisis older and much wiser. The old wounds may still be festering, but it is clear that bluff-calling is not the answer.

As was suggested above, the summer struggle was the understandable outgrowth of the ambiguity of the Community goals: Economic cooperation or political unification? Unfortunately, the Community rests squarely upon this fault line and periodic tremors must be expected. The leaders of the New Europe will, however, have to live with this tension. Let us hope that although thwarted in their bid to accelerate the progress of the Community, and gain at the same time a satisfying measure of revenge, they will be able to master the waiting game. This is the course to follow; it is the path to union.

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Victory

ROBERT WATSON

Moving furniture around my room
I can move stars, the streetlights and the dust
In rolls below our chairs. I can change weather
If I want.

Changing the order of books in shelves
Christ marries Helen, Alexander leans
On Mother Goose. I can change all history
If I wish.

Putting on clothes I have not worn before
I sit on a swivel chair turning my body
To something new. I can be President
When I choose.

Opening the door to watch the snow,
I walk frozen ground, past frozen trees,
Around the block, around. I can circle the universe
When I will.

Indoors I light a fire to warm the air,
I can move the chimney across the room,
Or doom the furniture in the hearth
If I please.

But you, like a frozen tree in frozen ground,
I'll walk around, I'll walk around the block
I'll shift all the furniture in my room.
I'll move you yet.

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The Thirties—Now and Then

DANIEL AARON

Among the thousands of readers who enjoyed or who did not enjoy Mary McCarthy's collective novel, *The Group,* there must have been a considerable number too young to remember the people, books and events that provide a cultural decor for her chronicle of the 1930's. Here are a few that she or her characters allude to without explanation: Hallie Flanagan, Tiger Flowers, Orozco, Krafft-Ebing, N.R.A., Robert Benchley, *Ten Days That Shook the World,* Pareto, the Lincoln Battalion, *The Autobiography of Lincoln Steffens,* Norman Thomas, "The Communist Manifesto," Georgia O'Keefe, *New Masses,* Alexander Woollcott, "Trotskyite," Bronson Cutting, *Anvil,* "Roan Stallion," Webster Hall.

Specialists aside, how many people between the ages of twenty and thirty-five could identify more than half of these names and, more important, recognize their right relation to the Depression decade? Of course *The Group* deals with other matters of more abiding interest than the intellectual chitchat of Miss McCarthy's youth (the involvements of her Vassar group of '33 are, generally speaking, sexual rather than political), but her novel is nonetheless a period piece if not a documentary, and its social atmosphere can only be properly savored by readers of a certain age and experience.

It is not necessary to dream up the ideal reader, because he or she could be located almost anywhere in America—anyone would qualify who came of age during the Depression, who acquired some education and culture, who spent a few years in New York City and was familiar with ideas and artifacts of Left Bohemia, and who belonged to the liberal segment of the middle class. But imagine a hypothetical reader, class of '33, as he becomes absorbed in *The Group* and relives his uneasy and disoriented youth.

What associations, if any, would he have with the name Hallie Flanagan? She might bring to mind the Federal Theater and the "Living Newspaper" of the mid-thirties. Perhaps he has read *Arena,* her own account of this experiment, or remembers the well-publicized hearings of the Dies Committee set up to investigate Communist infiltration of the Federal Theater. It was before this House committee that Hallie Flanagan spoke of "a certain Marlowesque madness" that infected the Workers' Theater and was asked by Congressman Starnes of Alabama if Marlowe was a Communist. "Tell us who Marlowe is," the Congressman demanded, "so we can get the proper reference, because that is all we want to do."

Only a boxing fan could identify Tiger Flowers or the "Deacon," knocked out finally by Jack Delaney in a stylish brawl, and really a figure of the twenties. During the thirties, of course, boxing was dominated by Joe Louis' ring exploits, particularly his defeat by the German champion, Max Schmeling, in 1936, and his thunderous first-round victory over Schmeling two years later.

Our reader might have to ponder a few minutes before he recollected Bronson Cutting, the well-born and progressive Senator from New Mexico who died in an airplane crash in 1935 while flying home to cope with a contested election. Orozco would immediately suggest to him the un-Dartmouth-like murals in the Dartmouth College Library and the popularity of Mexican revolutionary art during the thirties. Reproductions of Georgia O'Keefe paintings,

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especially the celebrated rose in the skull, were very popular at this time although devoid of revolutionary content. He would naturally associate Robert Benchley and Alexander Woollcott with the liberal if unideological segment of the New York literary society, and his recollections of Norman Thomas, the six-time Socialist party candidate for the Presidency, would obviously be colored by his own political affiliations in those years. If he had been what the *New Masses* in 1934 considered a liberal literary intellectual fluctuating "between the upper bourgeoisie and the proletariat; between Fascism and revolution" and moving "from extreme nihilism, individual anarchism, Bohemianism, skirting sometimes the edges of Communism, through Trotskyism, Lovestoneism, social democracy to N.R.A. and thence to Fascism" —then he might or might not have voted for Thomas. He could have been a "Trotskyite," the pejorative "Stalinite" term for the self-styled followers of Lenin's heir. But no matter what branch of the Left persuasion, he would certainly have known about and possibly attended dances at Webster Hall in New York City, well known as a place for "Red" conviviality, and he would have certainly gone to cocktail parties held to raise money for the Lincoln Battalion fighting in Spain. This was also a period when *The Mind and Society* of Vilfredo Pareto, translated in 1935, was being discussed by the intelligentsia and defended vigorously by a small group of Harvard University disciples notwithstanding his high repute among Fascist theoreticians in Italy and Germany.

Our reader might have subscribed to Jack Conroy's *Anvil* with its motto, "We prefer crude vigor to polished banality." *Anvil* was one of the better proletarian magazines that sprang up before the United Front policy of the Communist party doomed the John Reed Clubs (named for the author of *Ten Days That Shook the World*) and their indiscreet publications. By the mid-thirties, Reed was enshrined in the Communist pantheon, but his masterpiece probably had fewer readers than the autobiography of his friend and mentor, Lincoln Steffens, whose happy prognostications about the U.S.S.R. and Communism in 1931 proved most persuasive to many middle-class liberals. Undergraduates at Vassar and elsewhere who had furtively consulted Richard von Krafft-Ebing's *Psychopathia Sexualis* in the twenties and vicariously shared the "passionate sexual experience" of the heroine in Robinson Jeffers' allegorical poem, "Roan Stallion," discovered a new kind of illumination in "The Communist Manifesto," the one work of Marx that most of the literary "Marxians" in the thirties had read without skipping.

It goes without saying that Miss McCarthy's doomed girls managed to escape a good deal of both the joys and tribulations of the Depression decade and that they hardly constitute a cross section of the U.S.A. One has only to turn to the recently published memoirs of Max Eastman, Malcolm Cowley, Granville Hicks and Alfred Kazin or the collection of pieces in the Winter, 1965, issue of the *Carleton Miscellany*, "The 1930's," to learn what the thirties really mean in retrospect.

Judging by these recollections, what a person did or thought in those days depended upon his age and background, his place of abode, his temperament and his luck. And since these autobiographical reports are often written by people who are implicitly justifying a former radical commitment, the thirties tend to unfold as a series of crises and catastrophes. Social and literary historians corroborate this vision. They also portray the decade as primarily one of protest and violence.

It began with the culmination of the Bull Market and the Great Crash of October, 1929, the flurry of explanations, the deepening gloom following President Hoover's unconvincing reassurances, the search for the real culprits, the recriminations and jeremiads as "The Jazz Age in Finance" and "The Era of Mad Illusions" faded away. The following excerpts from Gilbert Seldes' "Short History of the Depression" (a résumé of the months between October 1, 1929, and May 29, 1932) catches the prevailing note of cynicism:

It could not occur . . . . It wasn't occurring . . . . It hadn't happened . . . . It was purely

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a technical operation in the market . . . . It had restored brains to thinking and money to productive enterprise . . . . Thanksgiving . . . . It was the result of overproduction and consequently men must not be fired, wages must not be lowered, so that production should not be cut down . . . . It was the result of underconsumption, so the victims (the guilty ones) must spend freely, instantly, to take up the slack . . . . Merry Christmas . . . . Corporations report vastly increased earnings. Starving man dies of measles in a charity ward . . . . Irving Fisher predicts a crash sometime in next two years if we are not careful . . . . The "coroner" takes the place in American mythology once held by "the West" . . . . Calvin Coolidge calculates that prosperity will return; mathematically trained Hoover makes calculation finer and gives date of rendezvous . . . . Good News of Good Times. Also buy now. Workmen unable to understand plain English, riot for jobs . . . . It was all the fault of Europe . . . . Purely psychological . . . . Prosperity fails to keep date with President Hoover . . . . Inasmuch as nothing was lost (except paper profits) the condition of America is sound. The sound is hollow . . . . Wages defy wishes of Administration and go down. Solution of depression found in economy, balanced budgets, and huge building program to employ two thousand men alternate Tuesdays and Thursdays, preferably without pay . . . . Nerve-wracking suspicion enters American mind that Henry Ford is not infallible . . . . In accordance with orders issued at various points, the depression ends . . . . Stocks hit lowest level, unemployments hit highest level . . . . an American army, by executive order, fires on American citizens, signalizing the return of prosperity and the beginning of a presidential campaign.

After the rash of suicides (some jumped from buildings, others inhaled gas or shot themselves, and one soaked himself with gasoline before setting himself on fire) came the grim appraisal of "the great Hoover panic" as a result of which the Business Leader was toppled off his pedestal.

The bewilderment, the blind panic and the incredulity aroused by the first crash [Gerald Johnson observed in 1932] had had time to subside. The false hope that it was all a flash in the pan, a mere "market reaction," had been dissipated. It was a year of stark reality, after living in a fool's paradise, and our reaction to it will unquestionably be of deep interest to the future historians.

And so it has turned out to be. Since then historians have painstakingly examined the background of the panic, the slow agonizing process by which the nation pulled itself out of the morass.

Millions of us, [reads a businessman's unpublished reminiscence] who got their early start during the great depression days of the early thirties have been stamped for life by this soul-shattering experience. The attitudes and actions in the later days of most of us have been affected by these early depression days. It was like escaping from a concentration camp; when it was all over we tried to forget it. For a person like myself who is able to shape a philosophy from things, I often compare those disappointments of a current experience with how much worse off I was during those early days.

Roosevelt's election restored national confidence to a degree but uncertainty and apprehension did not disappear even after 1935 when the grimmer vestiges of the Depression—the long breadlines of hopeless men, the respectable looking applesellers, and the "Hoovervilles"—had all but vanished. The days of the demagogues had arrived. Their panaceas were no less cranky but somehow more sinister than the schemes of ingenious visionaries who rose into brief prominence in the early years of the Depression. Dr. Townsend's nostrums attracted a large following among the elderly; some three hundred thousand Americans joined the National Share the Wealth Society of Huey Long (membership cards bore the paradoxical legend, "Share Our Wealth Society—Every Man a King"); and over three million people listened to the weekly broadcasts of Father Charles Coughlin from Royal Oak, Michigan.

These "forerunners of American Fascism," as Raymond Gram Swing stigmatized them, provided the texts for liberal and radical sermons. So did a variety of other causes and issues: the battles of organized labor against the antiunion policies of management; the "legal lynchings" of Negroes; the domestic and foreign affairs of the U.S.S.R. and the Third Reich. For any "engaged" survivor of the thirties, certain names and events to this day are surcharged with a significance that later generations can never feel. Tom Girdler was not merely

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the tough strategist for Little Steel; he was a reactionary s.o.b. fighting a last-ditch stand against a resurgent labor movement, a perpetrator of massacres. The Hearst press, as everyone knows, was a chain of newspapers, but the "Hearstpress" was a one-word epithet meaning "Fascism." The general directing the armies of the Spanish insurgents bore the name of Franco, but "Franco" was a Gropper cartoon in the *New Masses,* the darling of the Coughlinites, and a "lackey" of Hitler's. The Scottsboro Case referred to the trial of nine Negro boys condemned to death by an Alabama court for allegedly assaulting two white girls in a box car; to Northern liberals, "Scottsboro," as Richard Wright said, symbolized "to all the world . . . the plight of black folk in America." T.V.A. signified the Tennessee Valley Authority, a governmental agency producing and selling electric power and fertilizer, but in the minds of its supporters, it was New Jerusalem in embryo.

When the thirties are projected through a pastiche of memories or structured into climactic acts and scenes, a certain distortion of the decade becomes inevitable. Obviously most of the people living through these years did not grasp any grand design, and very likely they would have been somewhat mystified by the image of the period as it is preserved in the literature of the times.

Most literary historians present it in glaring contrast to the twenties. American writers—obsessed with their private problems, engaged in literary experimentation, apolitical—suddenly after 1929 switched their attentions to the problems of the masses, to the realities of strikes, starvation, evictions, class war. These writers, so the story runs, had to choose sides; either they were "escapists" who avoided, or tried to avoid, ideological entanglements, or they "committed" themselves to a revolutionary position and became propagandists.

Although this account contains a measure of truth, like most generalizations about the past, it simplifies by omission. Clearly the character of the thirties was of necessity different from that of the previous decade. Virtually every writer was affected by the social and intellectual climate, by the Depression, by the "spectre of Fascism" and the powerful impact of Soviet Russia. And yet the thirties brought into focus ideas and themes already half-formed in the twenties; old ideas and influences, literary as well as social, persisted. There was less consensus than has sometimes been supposed. Most of the leading novelists, poets, playwrights and critics, including those who spoke for the Left, expressed their feelings in highly undoctrinaire ways.

A number of revolutionary works, to be sure, were written according to a formula, literature of propaganda or persuasion that embodied the aesthetics of Socialist Realism or Revolutionary Romanticism. It described the lives of workers or farmers, miserably housed and fed; it dealt with victims of industrial accidents or racial persecution, with labor martyrs beaten by company gunmen, with mothers forced into prostitution—all presented as the "normal condition" of life among working-class Americans. What gave point to these proletarian stories with their idealized worker-heroes and virtuous poor were the realities behind the fancies. But often forgotten by those who see the orthodox proletarian story with its sudden conversion, type characterization and crude mechanics as typifying the thirties' mentality, is the criticism from the Left as well as Right that this kind of writing received from the start. As Kenneth Burke pointed out at the time, the best proletarian writing defied the aesthetic injunctions of the reformers by spurning the soapbox and by demonstrating that capitalist America was neither so weak nor so rotten as its grave diggers supposed. A closer look at the magazines and newspapers of the thirties, as well as the fiction and reportage, strengthens the notion that the writing is too diverse and reflective of too many points of view to lend itself to easy formulations.

A good deal of thirties' life, moreover, never got into fiction, poetry and drama. The majority of Americans never marched on the picket line, protested against Wall Street, disclaimed "counter-revolutionary formalism" or "neo-Kantian banditism," or took any interest in the Moscow Trials.

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For every American who had heard of the Communist Manifesto, read Lincoln Steffens, distinguished between a Trotskyist and a Stalinist, or seen a Group Theater production, there were hundreds of thousands who had not. For them the thirties meant not only the unchallengeable facts of scarcity and insecurity in their daily lives but also the vast expenditure of effort in trying to escape from the Depression realities. Hence Benny Goodman's swing jazz; the adventures of John Dillinger; the exploits of Joe Louis or Joe DiMaggio; the cinematic world of Jean Harlow, Mae West, the Marx Brothers, and on the radio, Amos 'n Andy and the Lone Ranger, compelled their attention—not the internecine wars of the intelligentsia or international politics.

The thirties, it is frequently heard today, are "coming to life again in all their passion and anger," yet, curiously enough, it is this nonpolitical and nonpurposeful *ambiance* filtering into the sixties through TV films and the revival of old songs that may help to explain the so-called "rediscovery."

Certainly the "New Left" finds little to emulate in the attitudes and methods of the "Old Left" and seeks no counsel from what Mario Savio has called the "vintage 1930." It remains to be seen whether the vogue of the thirties is something cooked up by the academics or whether it actually presages some important shift in public thinking, as nostalgic veterans of the Depression days would have us believe. Analogies between the thirties and sixties aren't hard to find, but analogies are not parallels. The spirit of revolt may be in the air, but as yet the New Left lacks the focus of the earlier Left movement; its goals are less definite (attacks against the "Power Structure" or the "Establishment" have little in common with the specific resentments of box-car hoboes and jobless college graduates), and its eclectic radicalism less hopeful. Furthermore, the New Left, unlike the Old, has no ties with organized labor, now grown fat and sleek and supremely uninterested in rent strikes, boycotts, sit-ins, teach-ins and civil rights.

But if the political and economic issues of the thirties have not yet and are not likely to become matters of imperishable interest to youth in the affluent sixties (the seventies may tell a different story), other features of the Depression years will in time, perhaps, provoke its curiosity. The thirties differ from the sixties, but they are not totally disconnected. Today's youth has failed to make the connection, not only because of its "infirm sense of history," as Lewis Mumford once put it, but also because it has not yet discovered the point of identification. The link is not likely to be political or economic even though we have our present day equivalents of migratory workers, the Black Legion, and battlers for civil liberty. Nor will the "cool cats" of Johnsonian America feel drawn to the idealized and ideological worker-hero of the thirties, the man of action and resourceful technician, stern, disciplined, virile.

The captains and the kings depart; the myths and mythmakers remain. Few people can remember the names of F.D.R.'s Cabinet or even his Vice-Presidents, but Mae West and W. C. Fields and Groucho Marx are now part of American folklore. What luminary of the thirties inspired so many popular jokes (the Roosevelts excepted) as Mae West? Her comment after learning that the R.A.F. life jackets bore her buoyant name ("I've been in *Who's Who* and I know what's what, but it's the first time I ever made the dictionary") was a boast that few of her contemporaries in the thirties would have dared to make. As for regal Groucho, never more serene and self-assured than when embroiled in chaos, he too has a special appeal for our apocalyptic times. And it is significant as well as amusing that another clown-figure reconciling the thirties and sixties, a counterpart to the antihero of contemporary fiction, is W. C. Fields. Harried, exploited, intimidated, unusable and yet capable at moments of ferocious retaliation, he might serve as one prototype of the New Deal's "forgotten man." Here is the authentic deep-down heretic who transcends forgotten issues. What better commentary on the Age of the Great Depression than his line from *The Fatal Glass of Beer,* often quoted in the thirties, "It ain't a fit night for man or beast," and his determined resolution, "The time has come to take the bull by the tail and face the situation."

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SYMPOSIUM

Thirty Years Later

Memories of the First American Writers' Congress

The First American Writers' Congress met in 1935. In the fall of 1965 Malcolm Cowley and Kenneth Burke proposed to the Editor of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR *that some of the participants in the 1935 meeting be invited to gather for a tape-recorded discussion of the Congress.*

Mr. Cowley and Mr. Burke believed that it would be useful to have on record the story of the Congress, and interesting to find out how perspectives had changed during thirty years.

Such a meeting was held on December 8, 1965, and the transcript of the discussion follows. Mr. Burke, Mr. Cowley, Mr. Granville Hicks and Mr. William Phillips were the participants, and Mr. Daniel Aaron acted as moderator. Only one of those who had agreed to participate, Miss Muriel Rukeyser, was, because of illness, unable to attend.

MR. COWLEY: I will start by reading from the introduction to a book called *American Writers' Congress*, edited by Henry Hart and published by International Publishers in 1935, a few months after the Congress had taken place. "From 1930 on," Mr. Hart says, "more and more American writers—like their fellow-craftsmen in other countries—began to take sides in the world struggle between barbarism (deliberately cultivated by a handful of property owners) and the living interests of the mass of mankind. . . In various fields, in various ways, American writers had been aligning themselves with the forces of progress against the prevailing dangers of war, fascism and the extinction of culture. It soon became clear that the writer, like other members of the American community, must organize in his own defense. In January, 1935, a group of writers issued the following call."

Before reading some passages from the call, I should like to comment on that impersonal phrase "it soon became clear." Clear to whom? Obviously, it became clear to the Communist party of the United States, because the writers who issued the call were brought together by the party and its functionaries in the cultural field, notably Alexander Trachtenberg, the head of the party-affiliated publishing house International Publishers. Incidentally, I attended some of the meetings that preceded the issuance of the call in January, 1935, and I remember that my self-imposed task was to persuade others at the meetings to make their pronouncements in English. It was a strange problem to face with a group of writers, but they all wanted to speak in international Communist jargon. I tried, but with a notable lack of success, to change the jargon into English. Anyhow, the half-dejargonized call began as follows:

> The capitalist system crumbles so rapidly before our eyes that, whereas ten years ago scarcely more than a handful of writers were sufficiently far-sighted and courageous to take a stand for proletarian revolution, to-day hundreds of poets, novelists, dramatists, critics and short story writers recognize the necessity of personally helping to accelerate the destruction of capitalism and the establishment of a workers' government. . .
>
> Many revolutionary writers live virtually in isolation, lacking opportunities to discuss vital problems with their fellows. Others are so absorbed in the revolutionary cause that they

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have few opportunities for thorough examination and analysis. Never have the writers of the nation come together for fundamental discussion.

We propose, therefore, that a Congress of American revolutionary writers be held in New York City on April 26, 27 and 28, 1935; that to this Congress shall be invited all writers who have achieved some standing in their respective fields; who have clearly indicated their sympathy with the revolutionary cause; who do not need to be convinced of the decay of capitalism, of the inevitability of revolution. Subsequently, we will seek to influence and win to our side those writers not yet so convinced.

More comments on this reading of part of the call. "Writers who have achieved some standing" meant that they were leaving out the kids. The kids had played the largest part up until that time in the John Reed Clubs and other organizations of left-wing writers. Now the party had decided that the kids could be pushed to one side, and that the writers of "some" standing would be invited. These writers "of some standing" included two classes—those who had clearly signified their sympathy with the revolutionary cause and those who were, perhaps, wavering in their sympathy. But others who weren't wavering, who had taken a stand against Russia or Stalin, or against the party, were not invited. The party could invite the so-called innocents, but they couldn't invite, for example, Max Eastman or Sidney Hook or James Rorty or a number of other people in the same situation.

Nevertheless, two hundred and sixteen writers got together and attended, or sat on the platform at, a mass meeting in Mecca Temple (later the New York Community Theatre, I think). Now, there were four thousand people in the audience, and my impression is that they all paid admissions, and that these admissions went a considerable way toward paying the expenses of the Congress.

MR. HICKS: I think that's true, as far as I know. I assumed at the time that these four thousand people were passionately devoted to literature. Since then I've become convinced that the party simply loaded the meeting. It told various units that they had to turn out for this particular meeting, that they had to sell tickets for it, and they did. I think it was certainly a party-packed meeting, but that didn't occur to me at the time.

MR. AARON: Granville, did you note how many of the original members of the John Reed Clubs were invited here, or was there a policy set by the party to exclude some of the more intransigent (and perhaps less) writers of less standing at this meeting?

MR. COWLEY: I don't know where the policy came from, but the—

MR. HICKS: We have a witness here. Were you invited as a delegate to the Congress, Phillips?

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes.

MR. AARON: Did you go?

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes.

MR. AARON: Now, the Congress we're talking about is the one that met at the New School. Is that right?

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes.

MR. AARON: The first one, the one in 1935. The one that opened with a meeting in Mecca Temple?

MR. PHILLIPS: That's right. Excuse me, can I interrupt for a moment? Does the question directed to me assume that I was in some kind of opposition? Is that the idea?

MR. AARON: No.

MR. COWLEY: No, you were in.

MR. AARON: You were a member of the New York John Reed Club, weren't you?

MR. COWLEY: No, it's strictly a question of, you were younger. You see, they were playing a different tune this time. The original popularity of proletarian literature had been among the kids, that is, those roughly from the lower twenties to the lower thirties. And then suddenly the party decided it was going to shift to established writers. Now, a lot of the kids were dumped at that time, which was—

MR. AARON: I see.

MR. COWLEY: To my mind, it was one of the origins of the great schism in the literary movement later on.

MR. BURKE: Can I offer just a tentative suggestion at that point? You spoke of taking a stand for or against the party. You

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say "the party simply loaded the meeting," and that those who were against the party were not invited. Somewhere along that line tonight I'd like us to discuss a related question. Must there always be a goat? Is there any kind of political structure that's not based on the principle of a goat somewhere? Is that a reasonable question?

MR. HICKS: Yes, but I do think it is rather important to establish the fact that the Communist party did initiate this Congress, and quite openly initiated it. I don't think anybody who came ever had any doubts about that. And the party initiated it very carefully. The call stated that non-Communists were welcome, as they certainly were, but the party was taking the initiative and, as Malcolm has suggested, anybody who opposed the party as such was not welcome.

MR. COWLEY: In other words, Max Eastman and Sidney Hook. Without the least question this Congress was organized or initiated by the Communist party. Of course, the impressive thing is that the Communist party at that time was able to organize a Congress that would be attended by a large number of American writers and approved more or less or acquiesced in by a still larger number.

MR. HICKS: This is important. What is also important is that from my point of view as one who was about to become a member of the party, this was a step ahead for the party. That is, since I'd been a kind of fellow traveler from 1931 on, I'd been very unhappy because the party was not doing very much to bring toward itself the writers who were sympathetic in their general ideals. And I felt that for the party to organize a Congress to which nonparty members were invited, and, indeed, pretty much allowed to say what they wanted to say—I thought that was a great step ahead.

MR. AARON: Granville, would you say that the decision on the part of the party to call the Congress was clearly a result of the new United Front policy, that it couldn't have occurred before this, if there hadn't been this historical event?

MR. HICKS: Are you sure of the chronology of this? Wasn't the Congress of the International after the call for the Congress?

MR. COWLEY: Dimitrov called for the People's Front on August 2, 1935, which was some months after the Congress. But the premonitory rumblings of the People's Front were already spreading over the world. They were spreading a little less, a little belatedly, let us say, in the United States, where Trachtenberg hadn't quite caught on to the system yet. But nevertheless they were reaching here, too.

MR. HICKS: That's absolutely true. I remember talking to Clarence Hathaway, the editor of the *Daily Worker,* in February, I think. And he gave me very clear indications that the line was about to make a substantial change.

MR. BURKE: Well, still holding to that point I started with, about the goat: Doesn't the dialectic of the United Front, Popular Front, all those phrases, really get centered in the fact that we had Hitler in common as an enemy? And wasn't it in '33 that this trend began to come clear? This seems to me tremendously important, the opponent as a unifying force. And confusions since then reflect precisely the fact that we now don't have a goat of that sort in common.

MR. COWLEY: Oh, but you miss something in the Hitler chronology. In 1933 the orthodox Communist view was the dialectic, that is, thesis contends with antithesis and the result is a synthesis. The Communist International judged that in the German situation, Communism was the thesis, Fascism was the antithesis, and Communism again would be the inevitable synthesis. The sooner Facism took over, the sooner it would fall, and the sooner would come the establishment of the Communist world state. That belief survived until the summer of 1934, two or three months after Hitler's Blood Purge. I know, because I talked with Willi Münzenberg when he was in New York that summer as a representative of the Comintern; he was sure that Hitler would be overthrown within a few months. But gradually the realists in the Comintern began to see that the dialectic wasn't working out this time, that Communism as a thesis was simply getting licked,

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and that the synthesis was going to be Fascist unless they took some new measures. The new ones were strikingly non-Marxian, a fact that introduces a strange element into the second half of the 1930's. What they decided to do in 1935 was to let sleeping dialectics lie. They would pave over the differences between the liberals and the Communists in order to create a large enough United Front, which would then be called the People's Front, to prevent the victory of Fascism. In other words, to anticipate a later episode of the Congress, the only forward-looking talk in the whole series of speeches given at the New School was Kenneth Burke's speech on "the workers" and "the people."

MR. PHILLIPS: Now I think Malcolm Cowley makes a very good point, that if you think of the Popular Front policy as Kenneth Burke, I think, was suggesting, as a rapprochement with reality on the part of the Communist party, certainly it is true that it was a rectification of a terrible error made earlier. I believe a good case could be made for the view that the Communist party had some responsibility for the failure to stop Hitler because it failed to make a united front with the Socialist party in Germany. But how valid and how meaningful this new Popular Front policy was, is, I think, a large and separate question of its own. But there is, of course, an interesting contradiction and that contradiction is one of the things that puts us, I suppose, where we are, and has us discussing this question. The Communist party seemed to be broadening out and, as I suggested earlier, trying to come closer to a more realistic position—I think the word realistic was used in this connection. In other words, it realized that in order to fight Fascism it would have to make broader alliances than with just fellow travelers: it did try to work with writers and intellectuals. And yet the Communist party, as was suggested here earlier, kept insisting that only people who supported the Communist party could be present at these meetings.

MR. AARON: I'd like to ask a question at this point. Mr. Cowley has pointed out that certain writers who had already criticized the party, were not invited, Max Eastman, Sidney Hook and others. And yet this was an attempt after all to bring together a common front. What about the Socialist party? Were they represented? Was any member of the Socialist party considered as a sponsor?

MR. PHILLIPS: Well, you wrote the history; you should remember the facts better than any of us, Aaron.

MR. AARON: Well, I didn't think so, but maybe Mr. Hicks would have something to say on this.

MR. HICKS: No, they weren't considered at all.

MR. AARON: Yes.

MR. COWLEY: Of course, in a writers' congress at that time, that wasn't terribly important, because there weren't very many Socialist writers, except very old men. So you could get together quite a large writers' congress without having any Socialist party representatives.

MR. HICKS: I think I must repeat myself. We have to understand that the party was just beginning to adopt the new line that led to the people's fronts and that there was great uncertainty as to what could be done and what couldn't.

MR. AARON: I want to go back to a point that Kenneth Burke raised, this question of the goat. The fact is that of these more than two hundred and twelve writers who came—

MR. COWLEY: Two hundred and sixteen.

MR. AARON: Two hundred and sixteen writers. Most of them were not privy to the decisions of the Communist party, knew very little really about the Communist party, but were brought together simply because of their common opposition to Hitler, Fascism, and by the general feeling that somehow the Soviet Union represented the forces of progress. But as a group they weren't particularly ideological-minded, were they?

MR. BURKE: No, they weren't, but—

MR. COWLEY [taking it away from Mr. Burke]: One feature of the late 1930's was the fact that the ideological level was quite low. It was low for many reasons, but one of those reasons was perfectly respectable.

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That was the feeling of a present danger, represented by Hitler. In the face of that danger, people were willing not to pursue their ideas to the last point. They would glide over, smooth over, ideological differences if they could get cooperation in action.

MR. BURKE: What I'm trying to get at here, all the way through this thing—whether we have ideology or not, is it not a terrifying fact that you can never get people together except when they have a goat in common? That's the terrifying thing that I begin to see as the damnation of the human race. That's how they have to operate; they get congregation by segregation. You might put that as your formula for this whole scheme. Is it true or is it not, if you can safely—

MR. HICKS: Of course it's true. H. G. Wells sixty years ago said we could never unite unless there was an invasion from Mars.

MR. BURKE: That's true.

MR. PHILLIPS: By the goat you mean Hitler—Fascism.

MR. BURKE: At that time.

MR. COWLEY: To take a word away from Kenneth, I think the word "goat" is wrong here because he's thinking of scapegoat. The word is "enemy."

MR. BURKE: I was thinking of tragedy, the Goat Song.

MR. COWLEY: It has proved very difficult to bring people together except against an enemy.

MR. PHILLIPS: Well, maybe it isn't necessary if there's no enemy. In other words, don't we have a tautology here? If there's no problem, if there isn't something to fight against, then we don't have to bring people together. The enemy or the goat, whatever term you want to use, can be either capitalism or fascism, or—segregation. In other words, if you didn't have segregation, you needn't have a civil rights movement. I'm wondering whether we've got anything more than a political tautology here.

MR. BURKE: The point I'm suggesting, or at least my fear is, that you cannot run a world otherwise. For people do have to get together, they do have to cooperate; and (Granville is backing me on this point) they get together by having an enemy in common. This is to me a tremendously important thing because there is talk of having moved on. All right, we might have moved on, in relation to certain questions of ideology. But as for having moved on from the standpoint of the way to confront the world, are we just going to do these same things all over again, in some other form?

MR. COWLEY: The answer to your question, have we moved on, is no. The answer to your question, are we going to have to confront the world in the same way against an enemy, is yes. I think this is a fundamental human pattern. So the reason I interrupted here was to get us back to the Congress itself, because we have here four people who actually took part in that Congress. To ask one question of one of them, Granville, do you remember those meetings at which the Congress was organized?

MR. HICKS: No, I attended very few of them because I was living in Troy, upstate. I did go to a couple maybe during the course of the spring, but I didn't go to anywhere near as many as you did.

MR. PHILLIPS: I remember a couple of those meetings. I went to a couple of them.

MR. AARON: Can you describe some of these meetings, can you recall anything that took place?

MR. PHILLIPS: Well, actually, the thing that I recall most vividly is something funny. There was, as we all agree, a shift of the Popular Front line. (I notice we are falling back into the language of the thirties—I haven't used the word "line" in years.) Anyway, whenever there was a shift of position, adapting to the new position naturally was not too easy. Some people were addicted to old positions and some went too far, and some didn't go far enough, and so on. I remember at one meeting Trachtenberg, who was officiating, was asked whether people who were opposed to the Communist party should or should not be invited. And Trachtenberg kept saying,

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"Well, on the one hand there are these reasons for not inviting them; on the other hand there are these reasons for inviting them." And he went back and forth, on the one hand, on the other hand. And at one point, I remember, Joshua Kunitz yelled out, "Trachtenberg, we know on the one hand, on the other hand; what we want to know is which hand."

MR. AARON: I notice that so far we've been talking about all the political considerations for calling this meeting, but were there any literary reasons? Was there much discussion about what value organizing a league would have for writers themselves, encouraging their writing, widening their audience, directing them, the kind of thing that you talked about, Malcolm, in *Exile's Return,* the advantages that would come to a writer who affiliated himself with the Left, not for political reasons but for literary reasons.

MR. PHILLIPS: My recollection is, it was considered square to discuss these questions.

MR. COWLEY: There were a great many arguments going on at the time about proletarian literature, for example, and the people who were interested in the arguments were also interested in the opportunity of discussing them at a Congress. And they did discuss them, as a matter of fact.

MR. AARON: Who appointed Trachtenberg to this particular position and in what ways was he qualified to be the general impresario?

MR. PHILLIPS: That's a very tricky question.

MR. HICKS: I don't know the exact answer. This was a self-appointed committee. The second part of the question is very easy to answer and that is that Trachtenberg was the cultural head of the Communist party in this country at that time. He was responsible for this sort of thing. And I don't think many of us were innocent enough not to realize that.

MR. PHILLIPS: In other words, he was the head ex officio.

MR. HICKS: Yes.

MR. PHILLIPS: Well, when I said tricky, I meant that's something you could never establish.

MR. HICKS: No.

MR. PHILLIPS: Something that some of us sensed.

MR. COWLEY: It is a rather difficult thing to express, but when we're discussing these matters we always tend to follow the old, old policy of cheapening them. Our emotions at that time were not cheap; they were deeply felt. Some of them were quite personal. There were at that time a great number of breakdowns among writers, actual psychological breakdowns. The 1920's had been like a long party, and it was getting to be four o'clock in the morning. It was getting to be the hour when a man went up to another man and said, "I've always thought you were a son of a bitch. Did I ever tell you that?" Or went up to his wife and said, "We've been living a lie, it's time for us to break up." So these people with psychological problems were looking for some cure outside themselves, which they found in the idea of uniting themselves with the mass or the group, and being not leader, but just one in the ranks of the great army that was marching toward a new dawn. If they could forget themselves, they could solve their psychological problems. So there was a great deal of almost religious feeling going on at the same time among people you would never suspect of having it, and who tried to hide their religious feeling in talk of the Marxian dialectic, *et cetera, et cetera.* The feeling was there.

MR. BURKE: I got into that tangle, too. I remember, when the Leftists first began to move onto the scene, I began to fear that they were dishonoring Shakespeare. For a couple of years there, I took all sorts of notes for articles in defense of Shakespeare. Then all of a sudden I made the discovery: Look, this fellow has taken care of himself for a long time, and probably will continue to survive without help. That did get me off that particular hook, at least. From that time on, at least that much of my puzzle was resolved.

MR. PHILLIPS: I'd like to pick up what Malcolm Cowley just said. I think it's absolutely true that the only way to look at this period, and we've all written this and

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said this in one way or another, is that it was a peculiar mixture of truth and nonsense, of cynicism and idealism, of clarity and confusion, and so on. If we don't see it as being a combination of these polarities, I think we are too frivolous and too negative about our own past, about something that did have some meaning, and some reality. But at the same time I think we have to recognize some of the nonsense in it. I remember one incident, Kenneth Burke, when you and I, and a lot of other people, were marching in a May Day parade. I've told this story many times and I think it illustrates a lot of things. I remember your joining in the shout, "We write for the working class." And I remember wondering whether Kenneth Burke really thought he wrote for the working class. How many workers read Kenneth Burke?

MR. BURKE: I do not remember the incident, but I couldn't deny that it is possible. Few can subscribe to all the slogans printed or shouted in a parade, but I probably joined in the shouting.

MR. PHILLIPS: I've thought of the story many times when I give graduate courses in criticism, and assign something by Kenneth Burke. Some of my graduate students have a little difficulty understanding you, and I have to explain the text to them.

MR. BURKE: That was the basis of my talk at the first Writers' Congress. That's precisely what they got after me for: I said I couldn't write for the working class. That was the irony of the case. You remember it, I've forgotten it, but I'll take your word for it. I'm sure I paraded, I know once—

MR. PHILLIPS: Can I have one more minute here? I think the reason that it's meaningful perhaps to talk about this, unless we just want to sit around and reminisce, is that some of the problems we faced, and I think probably fell on our faces in an attempt to face, and many of the mistakes we made, are now plaguing some of the younger people. We have a new mood now—we're all aware of it—among the students and all over the campuses. They're facing some of the same problems we faced, and the same contradiction—enormous idealism, really marvelous, marvelous idealism that you cannot but help admire and respect, plus a certain amount of confusion and a certain amount of foolishness. They're moving in directions they're not completely aware of, and of course they don't want to listen. The one thing students keep repeating is that the people who had anything to do with the thirties, the Old Left, as they call it, have nothing to say to them. I think it would be sad if nobody learned from our mistakes.

MR. HICKS: You're quite right, but I'd like to go back just a little way. We've talked so far, I think, as if the Writers' Congress in 1935 was the beginning of something, but it really wasn't. There had been a leftward movement of the writers from 1930-1931 on, and a kind of climax had been reached with the statement for Foster and Ford in the election of 1932. As somebody who signed that statement, and who was very much involved with Communism throughout this whole period, I would like to point out that in 1932 all the writers could do was to sign a political manifesto. Why I felt the Writers' Congress was important was that it asked writers to do something *as writers,* and that seemed to me to be a definite step ahead.

MR. AARON: Coming back to what you said, Mr. Phillips, don't you feel that the young intellectuals, those who came to the first Congress, and those who affiliated with the League of American Writers afterward, differed from the young radicals of today in that they did feel that there was a focus to their radicalism? It was centered, after all, on two or three important positions or concepts, whereas today there doesn't seem to be this focus. And this is one of the reasons why today's radicals have a difficult time identifying with the period of the thirties.

MR. BURKE: Isn't the lack of focus due precisely to the lack of an enemy in common? Isn't it always this same situation? Is there anything else to it? If we had a clear enemy in common today, wouldn't you get exactly the same kind of focus?

MR. PHILLIPS: Well, some of these students on the New Left, or most of them, I think, do have a general or a vague sense, don't you think, of an enemy. That is,

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they're against something called the Establishment, they're against something called the System, they're against something—

MR. BURKE: Let's—

MR. PHILLIPS: Let's translate System into capitalism, translate Establishment into existing society and its values, and this is more or less what Marxists and radicals generally were always against. However, there are some very important differences.

MR. COWLEY: The great difference to me is the Communist party, which is playing a very small role at the present time. And about that I've thought at times—all I can say is I've thought—and it seems to me now at times that if it hadn't been for the Communist party there might have been a revolution in 1932-33. I'm not sure that the Communist party didn't play as large a part as Roosevelt in preventing a revolutionary movement during the early 1930's when the country was actually in a revolutionary situation. And, for the established order, I think that this quasi anarchy that reigns at the present time, with nobody knowing what he wants, is perhaps more dangerous than a Communist party that actually did not want a revolution in the United States, no matter how much they talked about it.

MR. PHILLIPS: I think you're right, but I think there are a number of interesting and perhaps meaningful ironies and contradictions here. Look, weren't we all in this kind of dilemma in the thirties? In one way or another, and in varying degrees, we felt that the Communist party was a bad influence, organizationally and ideologically. At the same time it seemed to us to be the only party capable of doing anything, the only party capable of providing some kind of central force around which to organize. And we were all caught at various times, and in varying degrees, in this contradiction. The question seemed to be: to what extent would it be desirable to cooperate and suppress some of our critical feelings, some of our critical sense, in the name of some larger cause? Now today, I think, Malcolm Cowley's right. There is no Communist party in that same organizational sense, although I think it's interesting to note that it's there as a historical presence. And one of the things that the New Left feels separates it from what it calls the Old Left is the question of Communism. They feel that the Old Left might be characterized basically as a movement that got burned by the Communist party. And they don't want to get burned. In other words, they feel that there's no point in their carrying on the intellectual or the ideological criticism of the Communist party that dominated the thirties. They feel that they face a new world and a different world. This I personally find a little confusing. I don't know what the answer is. I think perhaps the situation is so complex, and so mysterious and so contradictory, that it may be difficult to get an answer, because the world is different today in very many ways. One important way is the presence of the atomic bomb. The change in outlook of the Soviet Union is another important thing, and the emergence of China is a third. It's a very complicated and difficult and new world, and what the more conscious students are trying to do—and partly succeeding and partly failing—is to move into this new world without ideological preconceptions. But without having ideological preconceptions, at the same time they have an enormous ideological innocence which makes us feel terribly sophisticated compared to them. And yet they're willing to face this world in a way that I'm not sure we're able to do. I've said that so fast it isn't exactly what I mean, but—I should stop.

MR. COWLEY: What about the tremendous failure of the intellectuals in the twentieth century? As late as the nineteenth century, as late as Marx, Darwin and Freud, you would run up against an occasional intellectual who was able to give a form to the entire world. Today there is nobody like that; there is nobody who has worked on the economics of today and the society of today in the way that Marx worked on the society of, let us say, 1850. He has been passed. You cannot apply Marxism, without enormous modifications that destroy it, to the situation today. And yet there is no single thinker in the twentieth century who has acquired the stature of Marx or Darwin or Freud.

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MR. HICKS: I think that's the fault of the twentieth century, not of the thinkers. It's all grown too big, too complicated; nobody can, no one person can begin to take it all in. I think that's the fault of the times we live in.

MR. BURKE: I wonder whether we might have a form in a certain sense, at least as educators. Can't we have a form in the sense that we can try to train people in the kind of temptations to which we are naturally prone, like this damn business of always blaming it on the other fellow, and so on? And there's the fact that we confront somehow or other the needs of a world order, whether we want it or not, because technology is forcing that kind of conclusion upon us. Isn't that a form? And a fact? I think that the avoidance of revolution in a society like ours is "wholesome" in the sense that a highly complex industrial state can't stand anything but a palace revolution. You get your revolutions, ironically enough, in places unlike those prophesied by Marx, places with economic systems that you can't destroy by cutting a spinal column. Each section can survive locally, without need of a center. It was the kind of situation that existed in Russia before the high development of industry—and you can see it in many parts of Asia.

MR. HICKS: I'd like to come back to something that Phillips was saying a little while ago. Certainly we did, all of us who grew near the Communist party, realize that it was extremely fallible and dangerous, but I at least, in that particular situation, didn't doubt that it was the best thing that we had, and I was willing to make some compromises. Well, isn't this exactly what the writer has to do in any kind of political activity? I mean, whether you support a Republican or a Democrat or a Progressive or whatnot, you don't commit yourself one hundred percent; you have your reservations. I don't think this is peculiar to the supporters of the Communist party.

MR. PHILLIPS: I think, Granville, what you're saying is theoretically true, but I wonder if the question of degree here is not important. You are referring to the means-end question, which usually involves compromise. But I think if you support the Democratic party or the Republican party, don't you do it in a very loose way? You don't do it with your whole being, you don't do it with all your feelings, with your whole theoretical self, with your whole mind, as it were. It doesn't exclude all kinds of other ideas, beliefs, doubts. Too much of us got absorbed, we might say, in this kind of compromise. In the case of a partial compromise, obviously what you're saying would be true.

MR. HICKS: Yes, but that is a matter of degree and I think a great deal depends upon how urgent the individual feels the situation is at a particular time. In the thirties I thought the situation was terribly urgent, and therefore I was willing to commit myself to the rather desperate measures of which, even then, I didn't really approve. I think that some of our younger radicals today would say exactly the same thing. This is a very desperate situation and we must take any action that is available to us under the circumstances, even though we know it's not the ideal one.

MR. AARON: In 1932, when fifty-two intellectuals signed the open letter for the Foster and Ford candidacy, the United States was in a very desperate situation; this was really the low point, 1932 and 1933. By 1935 the New Deal had already gotten started; there was considerable hope in the country; it was in a much more positive and dynamic mood at this time than it had been two or three years before. Do you suppose that if the Congress of American Writers had been called, say, a couple of years earlier, it would have attracted as many people? And I also want to know what the attitude toward the New Deal was at the time when the Congress was called? Was it possible to call this Congress and bring as many people to it because it seemed now as if the Left movement was beginning, not necessarily to affiliate, but to support, in some measure, some of the New Deal proposals?

MR. COWLEY: No, you're getting off the sequence of events. There was a considerable lag then in the intellectual ranks. The New Deal was still formally regarded as fas-

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cist, formally, although there were signs of reconciliation, a few signs, but the party line was still that the New Deal promoted not only a fascist organization of society but something approaching fascism in the arts. It was the time when painters like Grant Wood and Tom Benton and poets like Paul Engle were being attacked as representatives of artistic chauvinism. The reasons that a writers' congress could be called in 1935 and not in 1932 were, first, that the Communist party was no longer making its appeal purely to revolutionaries —they were beginning to attract other people, for example Granville Hicks—and second, reverting to the intellectual lag, that writers in 1935 were only beginning in large numbers to catch on to the situation in 1932. They were still living or feeling in the crisis of 1932, and they didn't think that the New Deal had ended it.

MR. HICKS: Nevertheless, I doubt if you will find in this report on the American Writers' Congress one single attack on the New Deal. I think the party had reached the point of being neutral on the New Deal but dead against Fascism. And it was exactly on these grounds that the Congress stood.

MR. PHILLIPS: I want to get back to what you were saying before, Granville Hicks. You were saying that the situation was so desperate that it justified the waiving, as it were, of our critical sense. I think you're absolutely right if what you're saying means that many of us at various times felt that way. But, if you look back retroactively, look at this as history, then I think the natural questions arise. Let me put the whole question in a very extreme way. I think Malcolm Cowley touched indirectly on what I want to say when he said that had it not been for the Communist party there might have been stronger and more effective political activity. If the activities of the Communist party had corresponded to the political needs of the time; if the Communist party in organizing the League of American Writers had permitted what seems to me essential, some kind of dissent (after all, everybody is screaming now about the right to dissent, that people have a right to disagree on Vietnam, and there should have been at least that much right to dissent from the organizational or intellectual views of the Communist party); if the Communist party had been a genuinely democratic and revolutionary party, then obviously the whole course of history would have been different. I think most intellectuals would still be supporting the Communist party.

MR. HICKS: That's an awfully big "if." Let me go back a little. What I've said again and again, speaking of myself and other ex-Communists, is that our intentions were of the best but that we made mistakes of judgment, and insofar as we were intellectuals we had no business making mistakes of judgment. I've said it to myself another way. Sometimes I look back on that period and I just can't imagine how I could have been damn fool enough to support the Communist party. In other moods, I look back on that period and it seems to me that that was exactly the thing that I had to do in that particular time.

MR. PHILLIPS: I think this is what we're faced with: that both statements are true. Really, both are equally true and that's why the whole question is so difficult.

MR. BURKE: I don't think that at that stage anyone would have been a damn fool in supporting the Communist party. For instance, the party took the proper policy with regard to Spain; and if only Roosevelt had carried that through, I think we'd have a different world today. As for an attachment to the party, in a way, in an ambiguous way, I was attached to it. Emerging from a sense of complete isolation into a sense of participation in a movement, that was tremendous. So when I took a beating at the Congress, I felt hopelessly rejected. That's what the whole thing meant to me.

MR. COWLEY: There were certain enormous ideas working through the 1930's, and one was the idea of comradeship, that you were no longer alone, isolated, helpless, but if you took the side of the working class you were one of a large body of people marching toward something. I have found that idea expressed in one poem after another, including a poem of Kenneth's in

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here—you know, your little poem "Plea of the People"—in one work after another, and sometimes with enormous feeling, as you would find it in early plays by Odets, for example. That was almost the master feeling. The other feeling was the value of human dignity, which you would get in such disparate works as James Agee's *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* and Malraux's *Man's Fate*. In one work after another, you would see this feeling that each individual person had a right to dignity. And these ideas all worked together to a synthesis which the Communist party had taken advantage of. There was an enormous prestige at that time for people who belonged to the party. They were listened to as if they had received advice straight from God; as if they weren't quite inspired prophets, but had been at meetings where the word was passed down from Mount Sinai, and as if they were making sacrifices that other people were not making. So they had a sort of mana that surrounded them and destroyed many of them in the end.

MR. AARON: I'd like to pursue this observation a little further. You say that there was a certain satisfaction, a great satisfaction, in feeling that one was affiliated with a progressive force, the working class, of feeling that one belonged in the vanguard of contemporary life. But what about the feeling of associating with writers, the sense of solidarity that you had as a writer affiliating with other writers? It seems to me that there's really been nothing quite like this since then. To some extent perhaps in the past, from time to time, there were groups of writers who would join together opposing some policies or supporting other policies, but one of the differences I think between literary organizations in the thirties and those of today is that group actions of writers today seem always a bit artificial, a bit self-conscious, when half a dozen writers will get together and protest a Presidential policy or oppose some action that the Soviet Union is taking. Just recently, I remember, a number of writers protested to the Soviet Union against the imprisonment of two Soviet writers. But that sort of thing was done more easily in the thirties. There must have been enormous satisfaction that writers took at this time in cooperating with one another and feeling somehow that they were important, that they were making some impression on a society that hitherto hadn't paid very much attention to them. Maybe one of the differences now is that writers today, because of their general prestige, because they are accepted in the sense that they weren't at that time, make a comparable action seem more self-conscious.

MR. HICKS: Dan, let's not be romantic about this. Writers were at each other's throats in the thirties the same as they are today. Am I right? No, this is not true, Dan. There was definitely the feeling about having an impact on society at large, but there was no more feeling of solidarity among left-wing writers than there would be in any other group of writers.

MR. PHILLIPS: There was also the feeling that there was an awful lot of nonsense going on. This is one of the things that I have never been able to reconcile. George Orwell once said: "There's a certain kind of nonsense that only intellectuals can invent, that the ordinary person could never think of." There's always this enormous contradiction: writers, intellectuals, are supposed to be smarter than other people. And yet when they get together, at meetings and conferences, you hear an awful lot of nonsense.

MR. AARON: But then as you read the reports (now, I'm speaking as a complete outsider), as you read the reports in the first publication of the *American Writers' Congress* you do have a sense that in supporting the Soviet Union, in making declarations in support of the Loyalist cause in Spain, the writers felt a unanimity. Maybe there were personal quarrels between writers, but there was a sense of—

MR. PHILLIPS: I think that's true.

MR. AARON:—of excitement and exhilaration, that numbers of people were getting together and voicing a common protest against certain acts.

MR. HICKS: This was not on literary grounds, Dan.

MR. AARON: No. I know that.

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MR. HICKS: To support Spain and this and that—

MR. COWLEY: You might have noted, Aaron, because you looked into my correspondence at the Newbery Library, how many letters I got from how many people, many of whom I didn't know at all, but they were all writing in because I was an editor of a paper that took the progressive stand. And even while they were getting involved in worse and worse quarrels, there was at the same time a feeling, even within the quarrels, that everybody was marching together toward one goal—against, as Kenneth pointed out, the enemy, the enemy being Fascism and Hitler, and the aim of the Communists being to show that Hitler was only an expression of capitalism.

MR. AARON: Let's go back to that 1935 Congress. Was there bitterness, was there a good deal of ferocious self-criticism, even at that point, at these meetings? Of course this doesn't come out in the reports of the Congress, but you people were there. Did you notice even at the time that there was a good deal of backbiting? I know that there was in some instances. In your lecture, Kenneth—

MR. BURKE: Yeah, well, that's a rather long story. Perhaps I'd be hogging too much of the time in going back over that.

MR. AARON: No, that's an important—

MR. COWLEY: No, no, I think that your paper was, or seems in retrospect, a focal point of the Congress, because you were pointing toward the future and most of the Congress was pointing toward the past.

MR. BURKE: I'll try to get it down to a few rudiments. But I think the incident does have a certain literary quality, or sociological quality. It's a time when I was fighting on many fronts, some purely personal. As Malcolm said earlier, that was a time when you were fighting on many fronts. When I wrote my piece for the Congress, I didn't know how things stood. I had a friend whom I took to be a member of the party (I didn't know, but I assumed that he was). I showed him the article before I read it at the Congress. I asked him to tell me what he thought of it, for I didn't want to do anything that in any way would be considered wrong. I had a terrific desire to belong; as they put it later in the mass media, you know, "togetherness." My friend looked at it, and told me that he didn't see anything wrong with it. So I felt reassured. But after I had been reading for a while, and was nearly finished, the Chairman, John Howard Lawson, announced that my time was up. I still had about two pages to go. Holding up the two unread pages, I asked for a bit more time. The audience applauded—which was taken to mean that I should be allowed to finish, although it could have been interpreted less favorably. In any case, I was allowed to read the two pages—and the audience gave me a nice hand. Since I was greatly afraid of audiences, I sat down feeling wonderful. Then a couple more talks followed. I remember Waldo Frank coming over and sitting down beside me. He started telling me about some similar article that he had written. I wasn't interested in Waldo's article; I wanted to bask in my own self-satisfaction. When Waldo had left and the other talks were over, then the boys got going. Oof! The point was this: As regards the question of the workers, the proletariat, I had admitted that I was a petit bourgeois, and could speak only as a petit bourgeois. But Joe Freeman gets up, throbbing like a locomotive, and shouts, "We have a snob among us!" I was a snob, in conceding that I was a petit bourgeois and would have to speak like one. Then Mike Gold followed, and put the steamroller on me. Then a German émigré, Friedrich Wolf, attacked my proposal to address the "people" rather than the "workers." He pointed out the similarity between this usage and Hitler's harangues to the *Volk*. And so on, and so on—until I was slain, slaughtered. The whole situation was reversed now. I felt wretched. I remember, when leaving the hall, I was walking behind two girls. One said to the other, as though discussing a criminal, "Yet he *seemed* so honest!"

I was tired out. I went home and tried to get to sleep. (There had been a late party the night before, after the meeting in the big hall uptown.) I lay down and began to doze off. But of a sudden, just as I was

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about to fall asleep, I'd hear "Burke!"—and I'd awake with a start. Then I'd doze off again, and suddenly again: "Burke!" My name had become a kind of charge against me—a dirty word. After this jolt had happened several times, another symptom took over. Of a sudden I experienced a fantasy, a feeling that excrement was dripping from my tongue. Some years before, in an early story, I had used this image in connection with an imaginary character—and now it was happening to me almost literally. I felt absolutely lost.

Later in the day, I ran across Harold Rosenberg. He took me down to some group that was a splinter of a splinter of a splinter—and that episode helped me get things back into proportion. Those fellows thought that the incident that I had taken so seriously was funny. "So they put the screws on you!" They laughed. That helped.

But I should add one more detail. The next day there were some meetings of special groups: playwrights, novelists, poets, *et cetera*. I attended one chaired by the friend to whom I had originally shown my paper before I read it at the general meeting. When someone indicated that he wanted to speak, my friend would acknowledge him: "Comrade So-and-So." Then someone else—and again he was recognized by the chair as "Comrade." Then I put up my hand, rather timidly, to indicate that I had something to say. My friend said: "Com—er—Mr. Burke." No *tovarich*, just *gospodin* Burke. It's amusing to think back on such things now—but I was greatly scared at the time.

MR. PHILLIPS: I don't think I was at that session. What specifically were they against?

MR. COWLEY: Let me read at this point. Burke had written:

> The question arises: Is the symbol of the worker accurately attuned to us, as so conditioned by the reactionary forces in control of our main educational channels?
>
> I tentatively suggest that it is not. By this I do not mean that a proletarian emphasis should be dropped from revolutionary books. The rigors of the worker must certainly continue to form a major part of revolutionary symbolism, if only for the reason that here the worst features of capitalist exploitation are concentrated. But the basic symbol, it seems to me, should be focused somewhat differently. Fortunately, I'm not forced to advocate any great change—though I do think that the shift I propose, while minor in itself, leads in the end to quite different emphases on our modes of propaganda. The symbol I should plead for, as more basic, more of an ideal incentive, than that of the worker, is that of "the people."

This comes from *American Writers' Congress*, page 89.

MR. PHILLIPS: What was so unorthodox about that?

MR. COWLEY: This was what Joe Freeman, and Allen Porter, and Friedrich Wolf and others jumped down Kenneth's throat for, and left him feeling that he was dripping excrement from his tongue. And merely because he had suggested what was actually going to be done by the Congress of the Comintern on August 2 of that same year.

MR. BURKE: Between the time of the Congress and the time when the book came out, they had a chance to change history, all right.

MR. COWLEY: They'd already decided to change "the workers" to "the people."

MR. BURKE: Before the report of the Congress the party line had changed—so the strongest details of the slaughter are simply omitted.

MR. COWLEY: Burke's paper was almost the only one delivered at the Congress that can be read today, not historically but with interest in what he had to say. It was a paper on revolutionary symbolism.

MR. AARON: And yet, I think it's only fair to say that this line that Kenneth Burke took did not stop in 1935, and you can find articles and reviews in the *New Masses* when Granville was editing it in which similar ideas were expressed, where proletarian literature was criticized for failing to take into consideration many of the ideas that you suggested. James Agee would be one and there were a number of other critics and writers who pointed out that it might be a good thing for proletarian writers to look at bourgeois literature and to take certain hints from bourgeois literature in ap-

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pealing to the broad masses of the American people.

MR. HICKS: I never edited the *New Masses.*

MR. AARON: Well, you were a literary editor of the *New Masses.*

MR. HICKS: For a while, yes.

MR. AARON: Yes. But while you were a literary editor of the *New Masses* such articles did appear. This is my point.

MR. COWLEY: I want to read some more about this. This is funny. This is a novel by James T. Farrell called *Yet Other Waters.* Jim Farrell, who believes in truth in fiction, set down his memories of the Writers' Congress as accurately as he could set them, and accurately enough so that I recognized everybody he mentioned. Here comes the Burke episode.

John Keefe, a chunky little man, with an esoteric critical reputation, was monotonously reading his paper in which he suggested that the slogan "a people's literature" would be more attractive than the words "proletarian literature." But his reasoning was involved and obscure, and Bernard [that means Jim Farrell], along with many others in the audience, became restless. He thought Keefe was totally wrong in trying to approach the problems of literature in terms of slogans even though his was more liberal than the one prevailing.

When Keefe finished and was vigorously applauded, Jake [that's Joe Freeman] rushed up on the stage. Howard Mather [that's Granville Hicks] gave him the floor, and Bernard was surprised when Jake spoke with such vehemence. Why should Keefe's paper rouse Jake in this way? Pounding the rostrum, Jake stigmatized Keefe's slogan as dangerously and subtly reactionary. It could be used as a justification of the Kuomintang in China, he shouted. And, in even greater anger, he declared that a reactionary Social-Fascist government in Mexico had used Keefe's slogan of "the people" and "a people's literature" to fool the workers. Banging his fist on the rostrum again, he cited the prerevolutionary history of Russia as a further refutation. For, Jake shouted, the Narodniki, the intellectuals, had gone to the people with a nonclass slogan, and, after having played a progressive role, had then proved completely reactionary. Jake next mentioned Senator Huey Long, and, gesturing extravagantly, he asked:

"Is it or is it not true that Huey Long could use this slogan of—the people?"

That is page 123 of Farrell's novel called *Yet Other Waters.*

MR. BURKE: I'd like to add, finish one final point about all this. The next day, as I walked down the hall, I saw Joe Freeman coming. And I started to cringe away. I felt embarrassed at such a meeting. But Joe came up and smiled and shook hands with me, and said, "Well, I'm sorry, old man." It was all over! And when the list of members for the Council of the League of American Writers was proposed for adoption by the Congress (and of course adopted) my name was among them.

I have one further little story. I want to tell that, and then I'll shut up. Some friends of mine had an aquarium, with a frog in it. He was a big frog, but there was a cover on it so that he couldn't get out. Then somebody gave them a little frog, and they put the little frog in the same aquarium. And the two frogs would sit there side-by-side. One day my friends looked in—and by God they couldn't find the little frog. The top was on, but where was the little frog? They looked all around, no little frog. All of a sudden they spotted him. There were his feet sticking out of the big frog's mouth. So they pulled him out; and since he hadn't started to get digested yet, he was all right. All they could do with him was put him down in the aquarium again. And they did. The next time they looked in, these two fellows were sitting side-by-side. All was forgiven. I often think of that story when I think about politicians.

MR. COWLEY: So Joe Freeman was the big frog and you were the little frog, and you finished up sitting side-by-side.

MR. AARON: Were you presiding, Granville, at that?

MR. HICKS: Apparently. I didn't remember that.

MR. COWLEY: Granville remembered another occasion, but that was the Second Writers' Congress, on which the critics' commission got together. That was a nice story in your book, Granville.

MR. HICKS: Well, that was a very sad episode for me. Anyway, Phillips and Rahv and the *Partisan Review* had removed themselves from the party auspices. And

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they were joined by Dwight Macdonald and Mary McCarthy. Am I right?

MR. AARON: Among others.

MR. HICKS: They picked out the session on criticism in the second Congress over which I was presiding to make a kind of demonstration. And they made it. Well, the one smart thing I said, as far as I can remember, is when Joe Freeman spoke up and said, well now, can we discuss criticism? I said, no, Joe, that's the one thing we cannot talk about. We never did talk about it.

MR. PHILLIPS: What did we talk about?

MR. HICKS: The fact that the Communist party was dominating the Second Writers' Congress. It was the truth.

MR. PHILLIPS: Yeah. I had confused for a moment the two Congresses. This one was at the New School. At the second one I was a member of a small, dissident and noisy band—Macdonald, Mary McCarthy, Eleanor Clark, Fred Dupee, Rahv and myself.

MR. HICKS: That's right, I had forgotten that. And, to my great amazement, F. O. Matthiessen lent you aid and comfort, which I was very unhappy about.

MR. PHILLIPS: I haven't read your book yet. Is this in your book?

MR. HICKS: Yes.

MR. PHILLIPS: Well, this may amuse you, what I'm going to say. It may be interesting; it's the underside of the picture. This band of ours, this dissident band, was really pushed or propelled by Mary McCarthy and Dwight Macdonald. The rest of us thought that it was silly and a waste of time to go into this conference and be critical, and be steamrollered.

MR. HICKS: No.

MR. PHILLIPS: Mary McCarthy and Dwight Macdonald felt it was immoral not to express our opposition to the way the meeting was run—that's why we spoke up at the session of which you were chairman.

MR. COWLEY: I want to get in at this point, lest I fail to get it in later, one story about me and the *Partisan Review*. Bill, did you ever know that I saved the *Partisan Review*? I saved it on two occasions, as a matter of fact, and the second I won't bother to mention, but the first was very funny. After that First Writers' Congress, the idea was to ditch and destroy all the magazines that had been issued by the various John Reed Clubs and to substitute for them a new quarterly that was to be gotten out by the League of American Writers. I wasn't much interested in the new quarterly because I was working for the *New Republic,* but I attended the meetings of the executive committee at which plans for it were being laid—of course, they were never carried out. At one point Trachtenberg said, "We'll tell them to stop publishing the *Partisan Review*." I was pretty indignant. "They've gotten out a good magazine," I said, "and they've done it themselves. Let them go ahead with it." After meeting with this opposition from the executive committee, Trachtenberg didn't carry out what seem to have been party orders to kill the *Partisan Review*.

MR. AARON: What year was that, Malcolm?

MR. COWLEY: Thirty-five, the summer.

MR. PHILLIPS: I'd forgotten this. I vaguely recall now hearing a story that sounded something like this, but I never knew it exactly as you're telling it now.

MR. AARON: I would like to know from William Phillips just exactly how the change from the old *Partisan Review* to the new *Partisan Review* took place. Can you explain this to us?

MR. PHILLIPS: You mean practically, financially, intellectually?

MR. AARON: Well, practically—

MR. PHILLIPS: What do you mean?

MR. AARON: Practically and intellectually. I'm not so concerned about the financial aspect, although that may be important.

MR. PHILLIPS: Well, when you say changed from one to the other, I don't know what you mean.

MR. COWLEY: From thirty-six to thirty-seven.

MR. AARON: The old *PR*, and the new *PR*.

MR. PHILLIPS: When you say, "How did it happen," you mean you want me just to recite the events—

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MR. AARON: Yes.

MR. PHILLIPS: I should say something else first. I've thought a lot about the period. And I used to have a pretty good memory; I had something close to total recall of these events. And I found myself, as the years went on, suppressing it. I must have been doing this for very good reasons, but I won't go into them.

MR. BURKE: No.

MR. AARON: His own experiences later—

MR. PHILLIPS: I found myself suppressing many of these things and not thinking about them. So I now have to recollect in a kind of stammering way. Well, we were, as you know, becoming more and more critical of the way the Communist party acted like an octopus, putting its hands on everything and trying to keep everything under control. And as we became more and more disaffected and more and more critical, we decided that we couldn't go on any more with the old *Partisan Review*. It is as simple as that. So we stopped publication.

MR. AARON: Now, when was this?

MR. PHILLIPS: This was in 1936. We thought of putting it out again as an independent magazine. But you will all recognize immediately what I'm saying. It's perhaps an historical cliché, although it is the opposite of what Cowley was saying, the other side of the coin. Aside from the fact that there were some practical difficulties (like not having any money), when one broke away from all these things one considered awful, one had a terrible sense of loneliness and paralysis. It was very hard to do anything. None of us was so sure of himself that he could just go out and act simply and directly. There was a period of about a year or two of drifting. In that period I met Fred Dupee, who succeeded you, Granville, I think, on the *New Masses* as literary editor. I noticed that Fred Dupee was also disaffected. And Fred Dupee asked me if I'd like to meet a friend of his—is this what you're asking?

MR. AARON: Yes.

MR. PHILLIPS: He thought his friend—who turned out to be Dwight Macdonald—would be interested in my views. I'd also talked to Fred about starting up *Partisan Review* again as an independent left-wing and anti-Communist organ. Anti-Communist means something else now. It's had so many meanings all these years that I hesitate to use the term.

MR. AARON: May I interrupt. When you say anti-Communist, would it be fair to say Trotskyist?

MR. PHILLIPS: No. I'll get into that in a minute. Well, I can answer that right now. We've called other people names, we've been called names, you know. The so-called historical record has been muddied up a little bit with some of these names. We were never real Trotskyites. I would say that we were vaguely sympathetic to the Trotskyites because Trotsky had been critical of the Communist party in a constructive way. His criticism was made in the name of freedom and democracy, and this was what we ourselves were fumbling for.

MR. HICKS: I certainly thought at the time that Macdonald and McCarthy were Trotskyites; I thought they were taking you other three into their net.

MR. PHILLIPS: No, Mary McCarthy was not very political at all. Dwight Macdonald became, I think, for a short period a Trotskyite, although he was really associated with one of the factions. But we actually were the ones who converted Macdonald. Macdonald was moving toward the Communist party when we met him. He came down to my house one day and we argued all day long, from morning to night. I had his back up against the wall. I remember my wife was yelling, "Leave him alone, leave him alone, leave him alone, let him breathe." This was on a Sunday and I remember we called it Bloody Sunday. He came in at nine o'clock and said that he felt sympathetic to the Communist party. He had worked on *Fortune*, and he was moving left. We said it would be a mistake to work with the Communist party. The argument went on all day long. At the end of the day Dwight Macdonald finally gave in. Then we became practical and decided to put out *Partisan Review* again, with the help of Macdonald's friend, George Morris, who was totally unpoliti-

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cal. Then Mary McCarthy and Fred Dupee joined us. Mary McCarthy was not very political at that time, although she had moral convictions about politics.

MR. COWLEY: Mary's sentence to me at the Second Writers' Congress was, "We're just wreckers."

MR. PHILLIPS: We're just wreckers. Really, I don't remember that. She must have been boasting.

MR. COWLEY: And that, that applied to Mary but not to the others.

MR. PHILLIPS: Well, let me say this again about Mary. It could help to be objective about this. Mary is a good friend of mine, and I think highly of her. I think that she was very intelligent, she had proper instincts; she loved intellectual excitement, and the situation was exciting. She was really at her rhetorical and intellectual best when people were arguing and fighting. At that time there was a lot of ideological commotion and people were at each other. Anyway, Mary was engagée, although she was one of the least political of us. Dwight Macdonald was rapidly becoming politicalized. Fred, strangely, was not a very political man. He was just the literary editor of the *New Masses*. I think you agree with me, Granville?

MR. HICKS: He had been on the waterfront, he was working in a waterfront union; and yet you're quite right, he was never very political.

MR. PHILLIPS: He wasn't very political, no. I mean, he was and still is a man of considerable sensibility, but not very political.

MR. AARON: One more question, why did you keep the name *Partisan Review*?

MR. PHILLIPS: I don't know whether I can answer that question honestly and objectively. I would answer it with a reconstruction, and perhaps, therefore, I shouldn't answer it. What I was going to say was that we felt we were going to continue the traditions of the magazine. We believed, as everyone believes, I think, that people, especially writers, in order to exist at all have to have a sense of their own continuity. I'm really trying to be objective when I say this. We felt at the time—and obviously let's say Granville Hicks did not feel the same way—that we were going to continue whatever was good in the magazine, which would include its radical tradition, without benefit of any supervision or direction by any political group or organization.

MR. HICKS: I now think you were entirely right. Tell me one thing just for the record, how was *Partisan Review* financed in '35, '36?

MR. PHILLIPS: You mean the old *Partisan Review*?

MR. HICKS: After the John Reed Club folded up, how did you keep going?

MR. PHILLIPS: Well, of course, a dollar went further then than it does now, so you didn't have to raise so much money. Nobody got paid very much. In other words, expenses were very low. You know how the initial money was raised.

MR. AARON: You mean, after the breakup of the John Reed Club?

MR. PHILLIPS: You're not talking about the initial money?

MR. HICKS: No.

MR. PHILLIPS: Well, only a few issues came out around that time. We still ran, but not in the name of the John Reed Club, a couple of lectures, and a couple of dances. In other words, we continued some of the activities which we had been running before under the auspices of the John Reed Club. We had the best dance floor in New York—

MR. AARON: This was at Webster Hall.

MR. PHILLIPS: No, it was in a building downtown on Sixth Avenue near Eighth Street. And we had a few lectures for which we charged some admission—

MR. HICKS: One of which I gave.

MR. PHILLIPS: That's right, one of which you gave. I'd forgotten that—

MR. HICKS: And a woman fainted.

MR. PHILLIPS: Well, that's all, it was as simple as that.

MR. BURKE: I have taken a few notes here, on the present discussion. I think there are two kinds of considerations being dealt with. There are organizational problems, problems of how you ran a magazine, matters of that sort. And there's something

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that, for lack of a better word, I have thought of calling "formal" matters concerning human nature in general. When William Phillips was trying to explain a matter of organization, he brought up what seemed to me a tremendously formal, tragic or comic or satiric kind of issue that involves human nature in general. He said he found himself "suppressing" memories. In other words, here was a change of identity that went much deeper than the problems of running one of those particular machines in a particular way. And as I once wrote you, Dan, although I felt that you'd done a wonderful job of summing up the era on the top level, you didn't get into the question of personal quandaries. It wasn't your job. But this other field is involved—and I think that William Phillips touches on it when touching on questions of identity implicit in the suppressing of memories. So I was wondering what is the ultimate implication of all this. That is: What are the problems, the risks of automatism and so on, that we confront, as we go from one such situation to another? Insofar as we're all pedagogues of a sort, how might our concerns fit in with those of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR? When we talk of action, we do so as pedagogues. What, then, in sum, is our problem as pedagogues? Could it be the study of human temptations, the lore of human stupidity, including one's own? We come here this evening not in the attempt to get back at somebody, but because we're trying to understand things. And isn't that the best thing we've got to offer as regards the whole blamed business, isn't it? Okay, I—

MR. HAYDN: Mr. Chairman. What Mr. Burke just said is terribly interesting to me as the editor of the magazine. In what spirit have you come here? What have you felt as you talked? I've heard, I thought, some intimations of happy nostalgia, of affectionate amusement, of anger, of all sorts of emotions. Do you mind asking each member this question?

MR. AARON: I think that would be a very good way to end this discussion tonight. What do you think, Malcolm?

MR. COWLEY: I wanted to put on record about the 1935 Writers' Congress whatever we were able to put on record, while there was still time. For that reason I'd like to mention one thing we have missed up to now, namely, that nothing else but the radical movement, and specifically the Communist party, could have brought together such a large body of writers. Then I would like to say that the meeting served other purposes than were contemplated by its actual sponsors. For, when the writers were brought together, they were found to be interested in discussing not only the problems of the revolution that was then believed to be just around the corner, but also the problems presented by their various crafts, which were discussed in many of the papers. There had been one previous congress of writers, at the Chicago World's Fair—in 1891, wasn't it?

MR. AARON: 1893.

MR. COWLEY: Yes, 1893, and it was the only other congress of writers that had ever been held in this country. In a way, then, for the craft of writing, the 1935 Congress was a decisive event. I would also like to mention that there were various sequels to the Congress. One of them, to which I have already referred, seems to me quite interesting. From 1930 to 1935 the radical writers in America were mostly young writers; proletarian literature, so-called, was essentially a youth movement. In those years, too, a whole congeries of writers appeared from impoverished backgrounds; I am thinking of William Saroyan, James T. Farrell, Otis Ferguson, Erskine Caldwell, Alfred Hayes, Robert Cantwell and many others. Those I have mentioned made names for themselves, but most of the new men who appeared in those years have been forgotten. Alfred Kazin for one has written about the period—

MR. AARON: He hasn't sunk.

MR. COWLEY: Until the 1930's, literature in this country had been first an upper-middle-class affair, then a middle-middle-class affair, then a lower-middle-class affair, but now for the first time we began to hear from whatever you want to call the impoverished classes, including the immigrants. The Armenians, the Russian Jews

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(not the German Jews, who had made an earlier appearance in literature, being more prosperous), and the Irish—not only the lace-curtain but the shanty Irish—one after another came forward during the 1930's, and their presence was very marked at the Congress. But most of them were among the youngsters, and the party had decided to shift over from the youngsters to the writers "of some standing" whose mere names would help along the revolutionary movement. The result of that decision became more and more marked during the four years between the First Writers' Congress and the Third, where almost all the delegates were persons "of some standing," and where they included many writers who had earned their standing through publishing in the cheapest sort of popular magazines. The effect on the younger writers was to alienate them from the Communist party. Some of them became Trotskyists, some became independent radicals, and some sheared off from the movement entirely. There was a new war between literary generations that started at this First American Writers' Congress.

Another result of the Congress was organizational; it was the founding of the League of American Writers. On that subject I have a number of memories. The League chose Waldo Frank as its president, and Waldo didn't do much work for it, so that the League by September of its first year was reduced to no dollars in the treasury, no organizational activity, and if it was going to survive at all, something had to be done. The League was kept alive by me, Isidor Schneider, Marjorie Fischer and Harold Rosenberg. We formed ourselves into a lecture committee.

First there was a great argument about whether or not to hold lectures. I attended that argument with a broken arm, coming down from Niantic, Connecticut. It was a broken arm on which I had a very complicated splint, rubber bands coming up above the shoulder to hold the bone in place, and extremely painful, and I was carrying a large suitcase. I stood in the corridor with no seat until a man gave me one. He had a seat next to the window, but looking at my broken arm, he made the other man move and gave me a seat on the aisle, so there would be room for the splint, and he talked to me. And who was he? He was a labor skate, an official of the Trainmen's Union, whom I had been taught from all good radical sources to despise. When we got into Grand Central Station, he carried my bag into the station and said he was going back on the 4:30 train, and if I would come back on that train too, he'd see that I got an aisle seat, and he'd take care of my bag at Niantic. So I left him and in the evening went to this meeting of the League, where we had a terrific argument about whether or not we were going to hold a lecture series. I won the argument finally, but as I went out of the terrible place where we were holding the meeting, there were double doors. I got to the first door, and two people went through ahead of me still arguing about whether the League should hold a lecture series, and slammed the door in my face. So I put down my suitcase, I opened the door, I held it open with my foot, I picked up the suitcase, I got through, and two other members of the League pushed ahead of me, opening the second door and closing it in my face. So I put down my suitcase and I pushed open the door, held it open with my foot. I picked up the suitcase, and I got through. And I thought, My God, when the revolution is won, is life going to be like this? But I had won my point and we did hold the lecture series. Meanwhile, the whole funds of the League were held in a tin box on my desk. The lecture series was a success, not a grand success, but each time we held a lecture it proved very easy at that time to get speakers without paying them anything at all, while charging a quarter or thirty-five cents admission. A little more money would go into the tin box at each lecture, and by the end of the spring I had three hundred and fifty dollars in the box. That carried the League through the summer of 1936.

MR. HAYDN: Mr. Chairman, at the risk of seeming persistent, do you think Mr.

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Cowley was evading my question or simply answering it subtly?

MR. AARON: I think it's tangentially answered, but I think that we might go around now and see what other people have to say about their views and memories. What would you say, Granville?

MR. HICKS: In 1950 or 1951 I was asked to give a talk at Bennington College about the thirties. The McCarthy era was beginning then, so I thought I would really try to tell these kids what it was like in the thirties, and I laid it on fairly hard. And after I had finished, several of the girls came up and said: "Weren't you lucky to have something to believe in, wasn't that wonderful, wasn't that a terribly exciting decade?" And I was unhappy about this, I was embarrassed, I'd oversold. But I think now, on the whole, I was right and they were right. I mean, if you look back at it from a sufficient perspective, wrong as we were on many points, I do think it was a hell of an exciting decade.

MR. AARON: Was what?

MR. HICKS: A hell of an exciting decade.

MR. COWLEY: Now what do you think of Auden's lines: "As the clever hopes expired/Of a low, dishonest decade," in that fine poem of his, "September 1, 1939"? It doesn't seem to me that our hopes were clever in the least. They seem to me rather innocent than clever. And the hopes expired, but with them, with those expired hopes, a sort of innocence and confidence went out of the world.

MR. HICKS: Well, it looked bad from the point of view of 1950, but from the point of view of 1965, I think the thirties were a very exciting decade and a fairly productive decade.

MR. BURKE: Let's be frank. I think I inherited some feuds, and I think that if I had been slain, as maybe some of my enemies tried to slay me, I'd probably have been pretty vicious about it. But as it is, I thank God for my enemies. So far we here all have survived, and we can look back on that period with some equanimity. I inherited a feud with your magazine, friend Phillips, and I would like to end up by just reading a little quatrain which is off the record, and it goes like this, to do with your having given Sidney Hook the hatchet-man job of reviewing a book of mine. But here is the quatrain:

> Cockneys get their aitches wrong,
> But if you would get yours true,
> Then join the evergrowing throng
> That puts an aitch in P()artisan Review.

MR. AARON: What about your reviews, William Phillips?

MR. COWLEY: "As the clever hopes expired of a low, dishonest decade."

MR. AARON: What would be your comment, Mr. Phillips? Is it a low, dishonest decade?

MR. PHILLIPS: No, it's not totally one. It's a half-honest decade. I really have mixed feelings. I think it's impossible to view this whole experience except with mixed feelings. Kenneth Burke seems to have unmixed feelings. Don't jog my memory because I'll tell everybody what happened with—

MR. BURKE: I think you're entirely right, I think you're entirely right, half-honest, half-assed.

MR. PHILLIPS: Exactly, half-honest, half-assed. As a matter of fact, this should be off the record, but you know, Kenneth, if I can call you Kenneth now, I must say this because I think this characterizes both the situation and our recollection of it. Memories that I've suppressed are being jogged now. You came up to the *PR* office after that review was written to complain about it and I said to you at the time that I'd like to see you write an answer to Sidney Hook's review—

MR. BURKE: I did write an answer, it's published in the—

MR. PHILLIPS: But you said before you wrote the answer you'd have to think about it, because you weren't sure but that the people on the *New Masses* and the Communist party might not like your doing that sort of thing.

MR. BURKE: I don't remember that, but you may be right. I couldn't deny it. It's very possible; I couldn't say that it isn't true.

MR. PHILLIPS: I'm reacting to your remark and I shouldn't.

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MR. BURKE: I don't remember it, but it may be so. I will say that I did write an answer to it, and the answer was published in your own review. But from that time on, oof! What you boys did with my later works, by silence, plus Clem Greenberg's hatchet-man job on my *Philosophy of Literary Form*. But that's off the record.

MR. AARON: Let's come back again now to William Phillips.

MR. PHILLIPS: Well, all of us suffered. We can probably match each other's sufferings. Now, as I was saying, I really have mixed feelings. First of all, I think I learned something. I think those of us who went through this period, in an active way, have a sense of history, of politics, of the relation of people to politics, of writers to politics, that people who did not go through this simply do not have. We may have done foolish things, we may have done naïve things, we made a number of mistakes, but we're not so innocent, we're not so naïve as—we're simply more sophisticated than—those people who never went through the experience that we did. I think there's no question about that. We can quickly, I notice, understand certain political things that other people don't understand.

As you remember, Eliot in *Tradition and the Individual Talent* says something about people who are always smarter than the past. He says, of course, they're smarter because what they know is the past. And it's very easy to be retrospectively smarter than ourselves or than each other. But I think that it would be shameful if we were to deny that past. I would like to stand by it, stand by its idealism and its stupidities. I did many, many foolish things. In fact I was going to raise the question of how to write about this period earlier. I haven't read your [Hicks's] book yet, but all of us have been at one time or another tempted or seduced, almost bribed into writing some kind of history or memoir of the past. I've always resisted, and one of the main reasons I've resisted is—I have written a little theoretically about it but never in the form of memoirs—is that I don't have the feeling that everything that happened to me was so important. Also I don't know how to write about my foolishness. Honestly, I haven't read your book, so I'm not being tactful here. But some of the other records I've read are full of self-inflation. If somebody was discussing how he reviewed a book, how his book was reviewed, or what someone said to him at a party—that becomes part of history. And I don't know just how to relate the little things that I was involved in to something big called history.

Another thing that occurs to me is that frankly I have mixed feelings about writers engaging in politics. On the one hand, of course, where else is this sort of free-lance, uncommitted or unfettered conscience or consciousness going to come from? Who else is going to scream about Vietnam now or Franco some years ago? On the other hand, writers are pretty stupid about politics, and that includes me, too. We're always making mistakes, we're joining the wrong movements or signing the wrong petitions, and making the wrong predictions. And there's a contradiction here which I cannot resolve. I don't know, maybe we just have to be both stupid and morally responsible—whatever that means.

I'm also very strongly conscious of the fact that we're living in a new period, and we simply must learn not to try to apply literally to the present what happened to us in the past. It won't work and nobody will listen to us. One thing the young people won't do is listen to us, whether we preach moderation to them, or our special brand of wisdom, or the need of ideology, or the need of abandoning ideology. First of all, they exist in their own situation and they simply cannot take over, as it were, our lessons and apply them to their situation. Besides, I feel some inhibitions when I talk to them because, after all, how great were we? What problems did we really solve? Most of us gave up politics at some point, because it had become too much for us.

MR. COWLEY: Bill, what are you doing—now? You're teaching.

MR. PHILLIPS: Well, one of the things I'm doing is teaching, yes.

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MR. COWLEY: Where?

MR. PHILLIPS: At Rutgers. And I'm editing *PR,* which is at Rutgers, and I'm writing—as Hiram Haydn very flatteringly thinks—not enough. Now the last—

MR. COWLEY: You have my feeling, Bill—to interrupt—that essentially the generation of the 1920's ruled the roost in American literature for about forty years, through a series, a concatenation of events. Now there is a new generation coming forward which is very very different. I say that mildly, but my feeling of this is as if a forest of pine trees were cut down and a new forest were growing up to take its place. Now I'm one of the last trees standing in the old forest, but I've seen this at last, at last. Owing to all these accidents, people kept discovering writers of the 1920's, they kept discovering them up to 1950 or 1960. But now essentially a new generation is coming forward, the whole thing has changed, and a good deal of the new language I actually don't understand, and some of the rest of it I don't read.

MR. PHILLIPS: I think Malcolm is absolutely right. And before we talk, as I think we should, about some of the concrete qualities and views of the new generation, I'd like to make one observation I think might be suggestive about how intellectuals and writers function in relation to politics. In the thirties, I think we were acting on an implicit idea, the Marxian idea of the writer and the intellectual as the alienated man. And as the alienated man he naturally was outside of society. But having a little bit of class consciousness, he sided with the radical forces of society. That was his political role, in alliance with the working class and other active and strong social forces. Later the writer continued to give his opinions on politics, mainly because he was a celebrity, not because he was an alienated member of society, or because he was an ally of some progressive historical force, but because he'd written a television play or something. He was a celebrity, he was famous, and if he was famous, he was supposed to say something about what was going on, usually in protest to what was going on.

Today, I think we've got a different situation, and you will notice that the New Left doesn't feature established intellectuals and writers as such; it features people who want to do something, activists. They want to go to Mississippi or they want to demonstrate. Some things they're doing are wonderful, some foolish, but they are acting, not theorizing. They burn their draft cards, they march, they have sit-ins. They don't have their poets or their novelists issuing statements to the press. In this respect they've emancipated themselves from some of the Marxian assumptions taken for granted by most of the people who belonged to the League of American Writers.

MR. BURKE: I get about six petitions a week. They ask me to sign these damn things; I don't know where they come from.

MR. PHILLIPS: Not the New Left. No, not the young Left, they aren't circulating petitions for you to sign.

MR. HICKS: Didn't Irving Howe's statement in last Sunday's *Times* [December 5, 1965] sound essentially the same?

MR. PHILLIPS: Irving Howe is not a member of the New Left. Both Howe and the New Left would agree on this. As a matter of fact, some students once said to me, "You're not"—I told this to Irving Howe—"You're not like Irving Howe, you listen to us. Irving Howe doesn't listen to us, he's always telling us what to think."

MR. HAYDN: Perhaps it's time to wind this up.

MR. BURKE: Can we agree on one thing? Thank God for the enemy.

MR. AARON: I think that the whole question of the Left in the 1930's and the Left today might be the subject of another meeting which THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR could sponsor, and that would be a very interesting one indeed. I hope, Mr. Haydn, that you might be enough interested in it to sponsor us at another meeting.

MR. HAYDN: Don't think I won't call on you.

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The Wonderful World of Culture

Or: A Strictly Highbrow and Artistic Subject

RICHARD FRANKO GOLDMAN

Some time ago I toyed with the idea of organizing a committee for the purpose of raising equestrian statues of American composers to form an avenue approaching Lincoln Center. While the encouragement I received was negligible, the idea recurs to me whenever I am forced to consider the consistently pedestrian nature of most pronouncements on the arts circulated in these United States. The *Summa Theologica,* or monument to America's current concern with the arts, appeared in the spring of 1965 under the imposing and characteristic title, *The Performing Arts: Problems and Prospects,* with the subtitle, *Rockefeller Panel Report on the future of theatre, dance, music in America.* This is, properly speaking, not a book; it is a publication: a model of the new style in Communications Arts that is destined to replace prose, and perhaps even exchange of ideas.

Although the volume is called a report, its tone is that of a Manifesto. But some readers may look at it in other ways: as a romance in the tradition of *Erewhon, Looking Backward, Brave New World,* or even *1984;* as an unconventional horror story somewhat deficient in suspense; as a contribution to the new folklore; or simply as a lexicon of misuse of the English language. Perhaps it is a combination of all of these. If, as has been said, the camel is a horse designed by a committee, there are grounds for suspecting that the writing of committee reports is on occasion entrusted to the camel.

One might begin with this possibility. "The performing arts" is itself a vulgarism so established that no one, apparently, any longer notices it. It is matched, in the language of this volume, by such delights as "the charitable dollar," "religious giving," and a variety of catachreses bewildering in their ingenuity and inelegance. But when writing of art and culture, or, more exactly, of "arts organizations" and "cultural standards," a certain imprecision and even incoherence are perhaps necessary. And perhaps the experts, "researchers," and members of the Sanhedrin who are the joint begetters of this work do in fact mean that the arts perform and that the dollar expresses emotion. When one considers, one sees that this is literally so: the arts, in partnership with the artistic dollar, are expected to perform miracles. It is the arts that will raise our "cultural standards" and that must "enhance the nation's cultural life." We are not permitted to conceive, in this mythology, that art *reflects* a culture or a way of life, or that culture, while it may have roots and traditions and embodiments, can hardly be said to have "standards." On the contrary: it is plain that in this folklore, art and culture are special varieties of consumer goods, foods that are "enriched," to be marketed in conventional ways, "with all the resources of advertising and public relations." The spectacular difference is that it is morally virtuous

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to sell these goods, *because they are good for the consumer.* One merely has to persuade more consumers that this is so.

They are also good for the manufacturers and distributors. According to the *National Economic Review* published by the New York *Times* on January 11, 1965, culture was a three billion dollar business in 1964, and will be worth seven billion by 1970. The *Review* notes that "Culture is the latest big business in the country . . . Interest in culture, say researchers in the field [*sic*], has become the newest status symbol, and conspicuous esthetics may become the norm, to the surprise of no one."

And this, despite sanctimonious phrases about the beauty and the efficacy of art and culture, is what the *Report* is about. Its aesthetics are, at the mildest, as conspicuous as Lincoln Center. There is something touching in the *Report*'s assumptions that art is a cure for most of our ills, including idleness (which, in the *Report,* is of course called *leisure*), that art "reminds us of our better nature," and so on, but these positions seem, in context, a bit strained. When it is possible to write cheerfully about "the sale of arts services" (by "arts organizations"), one is assuming either that the reader has accepted the premise that he is a consumer, or that the reader has no idea what one is talking about. The procedure is dishonest in either case.

As one would expect, the *Report* is concerned with "elemental matters" (elementary? fundamental?) such as "numbers of performing groups, types of facilities, character of services, and sources of financial support." It does admit that after all matters of "arts organization" are taken care of, "there must also be a sizable public, prepared through education . . ." and laments that it is impossible to determine "with statistical accuracy" whether such an audience exists today. That accuracy in these matters is never statistical is a concept foreign to the authors of nearly all reports; but no doubt we shall, eventually, as the folklore gains "increasing acceptance," be persuaded to accept as an Index of our Enhancement the accurate statistical reporting of such matters as the annual per capita consumption of Brahms in the United States, with breakdowns by sex, age, income, social status and locality. The exhortation that inevitably follows is that we must do everything in our power, statistically speaking, to increase our individual and collective Brahms-ratings.

The *Report* is an almost flawless model of the twentieth century's most popular style. It is immensely *significant,* without ever being serious. Its most striking characteristic is its attempt to substitute for serious matters, such as art and culture, the factitious seriousness of "arts services," "arts organizations" and "cultural standards." The tone of the *Report* is earnest; but being earnest is not the same as being serious, any more than being nervous is the same as being sensitive. The significance of the *Report* resides precisely in this pretension of seriousness, in its confusion of the vocabularies of art and marketing, and in its substitution of statistical clichés and easy pieties for any real notions of the concerns of art. The *Report* is all the more important, or "significant," for these reasons. It defines for us the vocabulary of the art and culture trade, and lets us know, once and for all, the nature of the thinking that creates arts centers.

For those whose dream it is to dwell in marble halls, Lincoln Center may well represent "a pioneering experiment." We are to have arts centers, if the dream of the *Report* comes true, wherever the artistic dollar can put them. The *Report* handsomely concedes (p. 117) that when the arts centers are built, "of *equal importance* [italics mine] is the attention devoted to planning the artistic program for which the facilities will be used . . ." The horse—or the camel—is now lost somewhere behind the cart, but at least we know in which direction it has gone. The first televised production from the Los Angeles Music Center was a program featuring Dinah Shore, Bob Hope, Henry Mancini, a jazz organist, and a virtuoso of the *bossa nova,* a use of the facility that does show a certain kind of devoted attention. And Lincoln Center wishes to persuade us that an expensive arts center is needed to present plays by Arthur

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Miller and S. N. Behrman. This suggests that the artistic dollar, too, is subject to inflation.

"Equal importance" finds its parallel in the *Report*'s doctrine of equal talent: "As talent is needed to create and perform a work of art, so equal talent—though of a different sort—is needed to create and govern the institutions that provide the settings for these arts." There are—or are there?—perhaps just a few concerned with the arts who will not accept this equation of the talent of a Beethoven with the talent of a Board member, however carefully auditioned the Board member may have been ("Board members should be as carefully screened as performers." p. 151).

In 1872 Nietzsche wrote: "Never has there been so much loose talk about art, and so little respect for it." He was born too soon. Nevertheless, in *The Birth of Tragedy* he said almost everything that can be said about the nature and fate of "the performing arts" in our day. Yet even he did not foresee the assumption that culture can be purchased or imposed, or imagine the mentality that could state as a matter of course that "for an arts institution to reach stardom requires time." He did foresee, with considerable loathing, the mentality that relates the pursuit of art to the collection of statistics and that suggests that "the performing arts have perforce been laggard in sharing in the research revolution." Nietzsche, moreover, knew exactly what this meant, which the authors of the *Report* quite evidently do not. In their charmingly innocent view, what this means is that "arts organizations" must study "their long-range goals in the community," acquire pertinent information about "audience composition and tastes," and "explore systematically what the continuing scientific revolution . . . can mean for the technological improvement of their artistic endeavors and for the strengthening of their economic sinews."

The notion of culture as something to be measured and consumed is a commonplace of the new folklore. It is defensible as a recognition of fact, the moment one redefines culture, or restores it to its original meaning in biology: "The artificial development of microscopic organisms in prepared media." This is the definition that the *Report* seems to accept; it conceals a real animosity toward people, who are conceived as organisms to be manipulated or developed. Art is in this way to serve the purpose of giving people, individually and collectively, a status rather than a function, and an image rather than an identity.

In a sentence remarkable for its grammatical slovenliness, art as the giver of image is delineated: "When the arts go abroad, as they are in increasing degree through cultural exchanges, they can disclose the vital and creative aspects of the countries originating them." This fine flower of thought for export is perhaps designed to show that we have rejected English as a means of communication, and substituted culture, or aspects. There are guilt and fear as well as bad grammar here. And the same guilt and fear underlie the statement that "a thriving development of the arts is essential to a well and safely balanced society." One wonders about safety, and whether no one has ever told the authors of the *Report* that art can be dangerous. (But not "the arts.") And when one comes on the thought that "increased leisure also creates a social imperative for the development of the arts," one can begin to worry as well as wonder.

On the other hand, there is reassurance in the *Report*'s explicit statements. "The arts can be a major source of strength for the business community . . . Their availability certainly encourages new firms to locate in a city and helps attract tourists and conventions. They constitute a growing market and provide expanding avenues for employment. There are, therefore, compelling reasons why, in the interests of his community and, indeed, in his own self-interest, a businessman and his firm should be concerned with the cultural and artistic life of his community."

Has anyone heard this before?

Some of you may feel that it's out of place here to talk on a strictly highbrow and artistic subject, but I want to come out flatfooted and ask you boys to O.K. the proposition of a Sym-

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phony Orchestra for Zenith . . . Culture has become as necessary an adornment and advertisement for a city today as pavements and bank-clearances. It's Culture, in theaters and art-galleries and so on, that brings thousands of visitors to New York every year and, to be frank, for all our splendid attainments we haven't yet got the Culture of a New York or Chicago or Boston—or at least we don't get the credit for it. The thing to do then, as a live bunch of go-getters, is to *capitalize Culture*; to go right out and grab it.

Pictures and books are fine for those that have the time to study 'em, but they don't shoot out on the road and holler "This is what little old Zenith can put up in the way of Culture." That's precisely what a Symphony Orchestra does do . . . it goes right into Beantown and New York and Washington; it plays at the best theaters to the most cultured and moneyed people; it gives such class-advertising as a town can get in no other way; and the guy who is so short-sighted as to crab this orchestra proposition is passing up the chance to impress the glorious name of Zenith on some big New York millionaire that might—that might establish a branch factory here!

The paragraphs above are from *Babbitt*, by Sinclair Lewis, published in 1922.* The research revolution has not greatly refined thought or speech on strictly highbrow and artistic subjects. But it is no longer out of place to talk about them anywhere.

To be sure, the *Report* does allude, on every fourth or fifth page, to Excellence, a quality that it finds admirable, and of which we should have as much as we can get. All of this concern for excellence would be considerably more convincing if the *Report* itself showed the slightest respect for the English language, or the slightest indication of concern with excellence in its use. The compilation and writing of the *Report* took two years, the labor of thirty members of the Panel, a "Special Studies Project Staff," forty-four "panel participants," thirty-one "others contributing to the study," a number of experts who prepared papers, and, obviously, a good deal of money. In view of this, one might think that the Fund might have been able to afford a copy editor, if not a writer or two, instead of another two or three "researchers" whose labors over the allotted time produced the staggering information that orchestral musicians, dancers and actors are not overpaid, and that opera companies operate at a deficit. But the propriety of showing respect for art by showing respect for language obviously never occurred even to those members of the party who should know better. In the new folklore a "writer" is evidently anyone who owns a typewriter, just as a "researcher" is anyone empowered by a committee to go about asking people what time it is.

One wonders how the authors of this *Report* define excellence in art. Perhaps they think it is the same as "stardom." Matthew Arnold was a polite, well-educated man, who used words precisely, and who, despite his good manners, or perhaps because of them, was able, when writing of Culture, to use the words Philistine and Barbarian. We may need these words again, as we need a Matthew Arnold to remind us of what excellence really is, and where it dwells: "among high and steep rocks, . . . reached only by those who sweat blood to reach her." As an antidote to the Rockefeller's bathetic little manifesto on Culture and Organization, one might do worse than turn again to the literate decency of *Culture and Anarchy*.

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the way it is

The Time and the Place

WALTER TELLER

The time, early spring 1965, and the place, Hadley, Massachusetts. I was riffling through an old chest filled with letters when I came on one written by Joshua Slocum.

Joshua Slocum, sea captain and author, was born in Nova Scotia in 1844. A naturalized Yankee, in the years 1895-1898 he became the first man to accomplish the feat he described in his book, *Sailing Alone Around the World,* published in 1900. Two years later he bought a farm on the island of Martha's Vineyard, eight miles off the Massachusetts coast.

From his home in West Tisbury, Martha's Vineyard, 17 April 1903, he wrote Clifton Johnson in Hadley:

> . . . my letter answered or anticipated your own in all except the Nancy Luce grave stones!
>
> Mrs Vincent the owner of the slabs is absent from the island, will return about May 1st. I will be on the lookout for your interest. Mr Rotch has come upon some interesting data concerning a wonderful N L cow. It will pay you to revisit Tisbury. . .

I had written three books about Joshua Slocum. I collected him, so to speak, and had been on his track for years. Whoever concerned him interested me. Now I had come unexpectedly on this unknown and long buried letter to Clifton Johnson.

Clifton Johnson I knew. Born in 1865, a native son and lifelong resident of Hadley, he had been a painter, illustrator, writer and photographer—a recorder of folklore, legend and the passing scene. But Nancy Luce, who was she? What were, or are, the Nancy Luce gravestones, I wondered. Mrs. Vincent? Mr. Rotch? And an N L cow, that is, a Nancy Luce cow, what manner of cow might that be? "It will pay you to revisit Tisbury. . . ," Joshua Slocum had written. Although the words were addressed to Clifton Johnson, as I read them again they seemed to be speaking to me.

In West Tisbury on a Saturday afternoon, one of the two days in the week when the doors of the Public Library open, the librarian in reply to my question said yes, Nancy Luce had lived in the town. She had been a poet. Did I know her poems? From a shelf labeled "Vineyard Authors," the librarian took down and handed me a skinny yellow-paper bound booklet. Aging and fragile and sandwiched now between library covers it was titled *A Complete Edition of the Works of Nancy Luce, of West Tisbury, Dukes County, Mass., Containing God's Words—Sickness—Poor Little Hearts —Milk—No Comfort—Prayers—Our Saviour's Golden Rule—Hen's Names, Etc.* Cottage City: James A. Scott, Printer. 1888. On the inside cover appeared the words, "Presented to the Library by Wm. J. Rotch," the same Mr. Rotch I had no doubt who had known of the wonderful N L cow.

I sat down and read the Complete Edition, thirty-two pages, which is to say cover to cover. Besides the poems the Complete Edition included a treatise, an autodidactic but nevertheless methodical exposition by Nancy, "Hens—Their Diseases and Cure," for Nancy was a self-styled "doctor of hens." Reading her vernacular verse and genre

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writing I heard the speech rhythms and voice of the folk and indigenous poet. Without technique, with obviously little schooling, the lonely literary laborer of West Tisbury processed the materials of her life and condition into authentic homespun. If her life was provincial, her condition was wrong. Nancy had been denied the existence a woman has the right to expect. She had lacked a partner of the opposite sex, and whether for this or whatever reason, was more or less sick all her adult days. She was also deprived of mobility, one of the great joys and pleasures of life. In one of her poems, "No Comfort," she wrote,

You don't know how hard it is to me
Because I cannot ride somewhere;
I cannot ride, nor walk out, impossible, yet
I used to ride once in a while,
On a canter, gallop and run;
O what a comfort that was.

Nancy's longest and most remarkable poem, "Poor Little Hearts," is a lamentation and eulogy for Ada Queetie and Beauty Linna whose very names, never heard before, bespeak an impassioned love. Ada Queetie and Beauty Linna were not, as one might suppose, her young. If they qualified as surrogate children, they were in point of fact hens.

Poor little Beauty Linna, departed this life,
My hands around her by the fire, my heart aching.
I wept steady from that time till next day.
I took the best care of her, days and nights,
I did everything could be done,
I did the best I could do,
I sat up nights with her, till it made me very lame;
Then I fixed her in her bed, warm, close by the fire,
Put warm clothes under, over and around,
And left fire burning and lay down with all my clothes on,
And got up very often with her, and sat up as long as I could;
I never took off none of my clothes for 18 days and nights.

Poor little heart, never can call me back any more,
When I go out of the room;
She did it as long as she was able.
For eight months after Poor Sissy's decease,
She would not let me go out of the room;
Called me straight back, as soon as I went out.
I fed her with a teaspoon in her sickness,
Good milk and nutmeg, and good porridge,
And so I did Poor Sissy.

I made fire days and nights,
To keep Poor Beauty Linna warm;
The day before Poor little dear was taken away,
She opened her eyes and looked up into my face,
For the last time, O heart melting. . .

Although I did not know it at the time, I was reading the fifth, the last and least satisfactory of Nancy's self-published editions. Later and elsewhere I saw the first. Titled *Poor Little Hearts,* only sixteen pages and printed in the 1860's, it lacked the treatise on diseases of hens but in every other respect was her best.

The librarian of the village library also showed me an unsigned eight-page illustrated pamphlet, undated, but written and published after the poet died: *Nancy Luce —Who Lived Many Years on the Island of Martha's Vineyard with No Companions Other than Her Hens,* and in it I saw my first picture of Nancy. I was not disappointed. Dressed in a long-sleeved checked print with short matching cape, and over her head and knotted under her chin, a scarf of the same material, she looks the part of a country woman who works in the stable of poetry. Forty years old—one has to guess at her age—she sits and confronts the camera directly yet the way she sits with elbows held in against her sides seems defensive. Nancy's face is long, her features rugged, her eyes, wide-set, appear dark. Their expression, I thought, was both gentle and shrewd, but also detached. Around her neck she wears a string of small beads. In her right hand she clutches a bantam hen like a shield protecting her heart.

I also saw pictures of Nancy's house and the gravestones Joshua Slocum and Clifton Johnson corresponded about. Those stones had marked the tombs of hens. Adjoining the east end of her house Nancy had laid out a graveyard for hens and enclosed it

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with a seven-foot-high board fence. At the time the pamphlet was written, 1907 as I learned later, one of the stones, now that Nancy had gone, was being used as a doorstep. In the text of the same anonymous pamphlet I ran onto mention of Mrs. Vincent, she who once owned the slabs, as Slocum called them. She was Mary Vincent, wife of James H. Vincent, and had been remembered in Nancy's will. "To my neighbor Mary Vincent . . . my Yellow Bureau. She has been kind to me when murderers were murdering me." Those details were furnished the anonymous writer by William J. Rotch.

William J. Rotch was called by his townsmen the father of West Tisbury. When in 1892 secession from Tisbury was achieved, they chose him as first selectman, an office he held thirty years. Proprietor of a thriving store, he befriended Nancy in her declining days taking her eggs in exchange for grain, molasses, kerosene and soap. Also a justice of the peace, it was he who wrote out and witnessed her will. While Nancy was one of West Tisbury's poor, William Rotch was one of its rich. When he died he left, so the local paper reported, a quarter of a million dollars. Every person and thing in the letter by Slocum to Johnson stood accounted for except the "wonderful N L cow."

When Joshua Slocum settled on Martha's Vineyard, Nancy, although only twelve years dead, was already becoming a legend. I had undertaken to find out about her because she had been of some interest to him. What I learned, however, did not satisfy me so much as increase my curiosity. Although I began because of Slocum, I continued because of Nancy Luce.

Among West Tisbury's older residents in the spring of 1965 I found only one who had seen her. Gertrude Turner recalled a time when she went with her mother to Nancy's house. They took with them a basket of food. Mrs. Turner then had been about eight. She had been afraid of Nancy because of the way she looked. She said that Nancy nearing the end of her life had been an awe-awakening sight.

Nancy's house, I learned, was a summer home, unoccupied, for the season had not begun. The time, as I said, was early spring, a good moment to see it. A town in New England, one must remember, is the unit of government and geography elsewhere known as a township. The part of town in which Nancy had lived was in fact open country—Tiah's Cove Road, close by a Tisbury Great Pond inlet and a mile or so from West Tisbury's center and village.

Leaving the village, heading down-island, I made a right turn around Brandy Brow, then followed the Edgartown Road. On the right I passed a rather large clapboarded structure, once a woolen mill but long since converted to other uses. On the left lay the Mill Pond, some called it the Factory Pond. A short piece to eastward I passed the tenantless building where William Rotch once kept his store. Not far beyond stands the little farmhouse where Joshua Slocum dropped his anchor and where he wrote to Clifton Johnson.

I turned into New Lane, thence into Tiah's Cove Road. A mile down that sandy still unmacadamized track I came to Nancy's low-slung house, standing half-hidden in shadows of oaks, and a hundred feet back from the road. Although I knew the house from the picture seen in the pamphlet, I felt that I might have recognized it simply from reading the poems and prose, or even come to it after seeing the picture of Nancy herself. The artifacts of the poet's life hung together. There was a harmony among them.

Nancy's house and its characteristic expression had changed little since her time. A narrow door and three narrow windows framed in a weathering shingled facade. Up through the center of the roof poked a narrow red brick chimney. The seven-foot-high board fence, however, and the graveyard for hens were missing. Pines had sprung up where the graveyard had been. Beside the narrow gauge stream that runs east of the house the volunteer pines formed a grove. Trees on the opposite side of the road had grown tall and cut off the view Nancy probably had of the cove. I walked up to the house and looked through a window. I saw a low-ceilinged wainscotted room and at

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one end a large central walk-in fireplace. A second room lay beyond the fireplace and behind these two was a third which opened into a shed. I could almost smell the interior damp which resides in an ancient unheated house. Fewer people lived on Tiah's Cove Road than had lived and farmed there seventy-five years ago. Nancy, neighbors, farming, livestock, a whole way of life had gone.

East of the village at a bend in the road where the Congregational Church once stood I saw Nancy's grave. She lies under one of the plainest stones in the burial ground's three acres. "Nancy Luce. Died Apr. 9, 1890, Aged 79," the inscription reads. The inscription is incorrect. Since Nancy was born in August 1820 she was sixty-nine, not seventy-nine when she died; not as old as the townspeople thought, or as she evidently had looked. Nancy's grave stands behind those of her parents, Philip and Anna Luce, and it stands alone. Nancy had been the only child of far from young parents. At the time of her birth her father was forty-nine, her mother ten years younger.

As for the stones with which Nancy honored her hens—much finer stones than the one she herself lies under—and which later belonged to Mrs. Vincent and later still had been turned into doorsteps—they had wandered farther than gravestones commonly do. From Nancy's place they were taken first to the West Tisbury Library, subsequently to the grounds of the Dukes County Historical Society where, so the curator told me, they now amuse the tourists.

Once home from the Vineyard I wrote to half a dozen booksellers. I asked for copies of Nancy's poems and anything else pertaining to her. From Goodspeed's Book Shop, George T. Goodspeed replied saying sorry, but they had nothing; that there was, however, a short piece about her in C. E. Goodspeed's *Yankee Bookseller.*

C. E. Goodspeed was George T.'s father. In a chapter called "Catalogues and Comments" he reproduced a photo of Nancy. Seated in a high-backed Windsor chair, Nancy, older, eroded and as though eaten, looks both haunted and haunting. The change in her face and expression are shocking. She wears the same string of beads as before, a cape over her dress, a scarf over her head. On her lap she holds a white hen. A caption she printed in fanciful letters embroidered with hearts reads, Miss Nancy Luce, and below the words, the name of the bird in her arms, T. T. B. Pinky. T. T. B. Pinky was a name I had seen spelled out on one of the marble gravestones, a later generation poor little heart. Heart and its conventional representation are Nancy's key word and emblem. What was the situation with respect to her own?

> Poor Tweedle Dedel Bebbee Pinky
> Died June 19, 1871.
> at 1/4 past 7 oc. in the eve.
> aged 4 yrs.
> Poor dear little heart
> Sore broke in her
> I am left broken hearted
> She was my own heart within me
> She had more than common wit
> She is taken from the evil to come.

In *Yankee Bookseller,* Charles E. Goodspeed wrote: "Nancy's literary remains comprise a large box of manuscripts which, with her family Bible, photographs, and other Luce-ana, were sold after her death to reimburse the town for her burial charges. They are now in my possession, awaiting the advent of an enterprising publisher." That was in 1937.

I fired off a letter to George T. Goodspeed. Tell me, please, where are they now? Came the reply. "I am very sorry to say that I do not know who bought the big collection of Nancy's literary remains."

There was nothing to do but set off in another direction. In a back issue, May 1962, of *The Dukes County Intelligencer,* quarterly publication of the Dukes County Historical Society, I stumbled onto a piece called "Some Vineyard Authors," and still another photo of Nancy. I read of "Tisbury born author-editor Ben Clough" who in an article had asked, ". . . whence came Nancy's peculiar prosody, a unique sort of free verse?" Since nobody knows how a poet transforms experience, this seemed to raise

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the right question. And it led to a further one: who is Ben Clough?

Research showed Benjamin Crocker Clough had edited *The American Imagination at Work,* a volume of tall tales and folktales published in 1947. From his native Martha's Vineyard he had gone to Harvard. Afterward he was chairman of the Greek and Latin department of Brown University but by 1965 was listed as professor of classics emeritus. I wrote and asked Mr. Clough three questions. Where could I find his piece about Nancy Luce? Who had written the unsigned pamphlet about her—the one I had read in West Tisbury? The literary remains Charles E. Goodspeed once owned —where had they got to?

Professor Clough sent a very fast, an almost racing reply. From his home in Providence, 17 May 1965, he wrote that his article, "Poor Nancy Luce," appeared in *The New Colophon,* September 1949; that the unsigned pamphlet I had asked about was the work of George A. Hough. And then this:

> In 1941 I bought Nancy's literary remains from Charles E. Goodspeed. I gave the collection to the Harris Collection of American Poetry two years ago, and just as I was completing the transaction, I had a letter from Henry Hough, giving me without any strings, George A. Hough's collection. This, with Henry's approval, I added to my Harris gift. Henry had made some additions to his father's collection, and I had made some to Nancy's little trunkful . . . visit the John Hay Library of Brown University. . .

For the first comprehensive scholarly as well as fascinating account of the poet, Ben C. Clough wins the laurel. After buying the manuscripts, he says in "Poor Nancy Luce," he "read them all—possibly the first person since their creator to have done so." Very fittingly, Professor Clough estimates Nancy's course of instruction.

> She must have had some schooling, for though her idiom was rustic and her spelling and grammar sometimes showed lapses, she wrote a neat —in her earlier years a beautiful—hand; and she kept minute and accurate accounts of her income (from hay, eggs, milk, and poems) and of her expenses (chiefly for medicines); provisions she obtained by barter, and of barter she kept little record. Something of the three R's, then, Nancy had, and a good deal more she must have gained from her scanty library—a Bible, a Psalter, an almanac, a hymn-book, and a dismal but cherished little volume called *A Friendly Visit to the House of Mourning.*

Summing up her story, Mr. Clough writes: "More than the eggs, the milk, and the hay, the literary life was Nancy's subsistence. It kept her going, after some sort." The Literary Life as Subsistence, he might have called his study.

George A. Hough, in his pamphlet, noted a piece about Nancy published in the *Atlantic Monthly* not long after she died. Actually, the *Atlantic* published two items. Unsigned, both appeared in the department called The Contributors' Club, the first in July 1892 under the heading "Hens and Their Laureate," the second in October of the same year, "A Visit to the 'Laureate of Hens.'" The former, genteel and terribly literary, praises the poems and poet. The latter gives an eye-witness account of Nancy in October 1887.

> I see again the old gray-shingled front of her dwelling, startlingly set off by the green door and window casings, and attracting further attention by this sign, close to its entrance:—
>
> "I forbid all persons coming here on the Sabbath.
>
> Nancy Luce."
>
> On the right a high board fence is set thickly with three rows of nails that suggest a question which is answered by many tales afloat on the island. We were told that Miss Nancy underwent malicious teasing which sometimes amounted to torture; not from her neighbors or any of the islanders, it is justice to say, but from strange visitors. . .

The unknown writer reported that Nancy no longer appeared

> as represented in the frontispiece of her odd pamphlet, or as, in her best days. . . She is a grotesque figure. . . Over her head, down on her forehead, and close under her chin, so that not one strand of hair is visible, is drawn a thick woolen hood. This accents the unusual length and pallor of her face. . . Her dark, heavy eyes, unshaded by lashes, are eloquent of pain

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and reproach. But it is her hands that bear chief witness to her sufferings. . .

Not only the hands gave testimony but also what the hands wrote, and the changes in the handwriting. Ridicule can kill the creative impulse. Like many an outsider in her own country, Nancy Luce was dishonored. The "teasing which sometimes amounted to torture" was not the work of "strange visitors"—as Vineyarders by and large must have known—but rather the work of homegrown young punks of both sexes. In fact, baiting Nancy was quite a popular sport. You could serenade her with pots and pans, bang on her side door, rattle the pantry window, heave rocks and logs over the fence and into the graveyard, gather up cow dung and plaster it around the entry, or just cuss her out. These encounters with "murderers," "gross sinners," and "stone hearts," as she called them, were recorded by Nancy and survive among her literary remains.

In his book, *Martha's Vineyard Summer Resort 1835-1935,* in a chapter titled "A Woman and Her Hens," Henry Beetle Hough, editor and publisher of the *Vineyard Gazette* since 1920, wrote: "For years this woman with a melancholy face was an attraction in summer life ranking with the Katama clambakes, the illuminations, and the meetings in the Tabernacle." According to Mr. Hough, camp meeting people visiting Oak Bluffs in the 1860's heard of Nancy

> largely through the influence of livery stable keepers who took their fares on the long drive from the camp ground, through the village of Holmes Hole, over the road up-Island. . . to the home of Nancy Luce. The drive was an adventure, and the woman of the hens was a "character"—the sort of character who stands in the background of a summer resort and has a spell to cast. . .

Many summers Nancy's booklet, and photographs of her holding a hen, were on sale at the camp meeting grounds down-island. Up-island, she herself sold them at home, twenty-five cents a copy, poems or picture. She must have begun this enterprise very soon after the Civil War ended, probably in 1866, with her first offering, *Poor Little Hearts.* The revision and enlargement which she called the *Complete Edition . . .,* she had printed in 1871, reprinted in 1875, in 1883, and finally in 1888, two years before she died. Henry Beetle Hough quotes lines Nancy wrote in her Psalter.

> Good behavior of foreign folks
> From camp meeting,
> They behaved well
> And bought books of me.
> I cannot live without them.
> I want to see tender hearted folks. . .

Guide books down to the present day have taken notice of Nancy. *A Guide to Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket with a Directory of the Cottage City,* 1878, devoted a couple of pages to her.

> In the upper part of the island, [wrote its author, Richard L. Pease, born in Edgartown in 1814] there resides a singular creature whose secluded life and remarkable eccentricities have long made her an object of peculiar interest. . . So far as the facts are concerned, there is really no reason for her strange mode of living and procedure, although certain pretending people have labored in vain to evolve from their own inner consciousness a romantic story of jilted love and celibate vows. . . As to her age, no man has ever ascertained that interesting fact from Nancy, though inquiry among her island friends shows that it is not far from seventy-five years. . .

If those words were written in 1875—Pease's copyright date is 1876—Nancy was then fifty-five.

Richard Pease, a school teacher when he was young, later held various public offices. He became a Presidential elector and cast his ballot for General Grant. Of Nancy's poetry he wrote: "It is a dreary waste of nonsense—a mere jingle of words—and yet amusing from its very silliness."

The grand potential of the literary life lies in the judgment of posterity. The five pieces written about Nancy Luce—two by contributors to the *Atlantic Monthly,* and one each by George A. Hough, Henry Beetle Hough and Ben C. Clough—span almost sixty years.

I went to Brown University and in the John Hay Library met Mr. Clough. The Luceana was brought from the vault, three

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boxes of papers arranged in folders, each item accession numbered. I saw for the first time *Poor Little Hearts,* Nancy's first edition, one of two copies of that edition, so far as I know, extant.

Unlike most women of her station and time, Nancy left evidence that she had lived. On fine paper penned in a rather pictorial hand, the pages sewed into homemade booklets, on scraps of wallpaper, on brown wrapping paper, on William J. Rotch's flour bags, she said, in reality, Nancy was here. The curlicues, hearts and lacy adornments with which she embellished human and animal names suggest an affectionate playful nature. Deeds, account books, journal and diary fragments, doctor's prescriptions, bills, receipts, clippings, memoranda, photographs, poems—all told, hundreds of snatches of writing—the chaotic, queer, repelling, affecting ravelings of a lifetime. It was a long road the papers had traveled, from the little house on Tiah's Cove to the marble hall at Brown.

Island born, island raised, island buried, Nancy Luce never set foot on the mainland. While her literary and other remains chart the course of a sealed in and desperate life there are, inevitably, gaps in the story and one at least strikes me as very important. Soon after the age of twenty something crucial happened to Nancy. Up to the age of twenty she farms, she rides; she is by all accounts an outstanding horsewoman. She writes, paints, knits stockings and does her chores. She buys on consignment from Edgartown merchants and sells the goods in West Tisbury. She also buys "three barrels and a half of flour every year and over a hundred weight of cheese every year that my folks eat and mutton and beef in plenty and part of Father's Clothes." But then all this leaves her. Five years later she writes:

I'm strained, & that is dreadful to undergo, & dangerous. & the whole cause of it, is troubles, & trials, that I have met with. I undergo more than tongue can express, by spells, everyday, for about 3 or 4 months at a time, or thereabouts, & then I get a little better, for about as long a time, & that is the way, year after year, with one of my worst complaints. . . Some part of these years, that I undergo the most, then I cannot do the leastest morsel to a picture, nor write not any. . . Dr W H Luce, has cured many very bad complaints for me, & helpt many more of them, slowly, & patched along many more of them. It seems as if, 2 of my worst complaints cannot be cured, only patched along, & helpt very slowly. Discouraging.

In the summer of 1965 I returned to the island. I saw Joseph Chase Allen, author of *Tales and Trails of Martha's Vineyard* and senior staff member of the *Vineyard Gazette.* Mr. Allen had heard about Nancy Luce from Moses Norton, a Chilmark farmer of an earlier generation who was also a cartwright, boatbuilder and harness maker and who displayed in front of his place a sign: "Anything in Wood, Iron or Leather." Moses Norton, about 1906, told a then young Joe Allen that Nancy had been a beautiful girl and a horsewoman who would jump stone walls and fences, an unusual accomplishment among young women of her day. She attended social gatherings all over the island for she had her own transportation. "She would dress up to go to a dance and I can see her now with her handkerchief wrapped around her sleeve to protect it from the horse." Mr. Allen added that Mr. Norton said several times how very nice looking she was. Mr. Norton, it is clear, admired Nancy. Perhaps he worked on her bridle and gear.

According to Joseph Chase Allen's information, Nancy expected to marry a young man who sailed on a whaling voyage but did not return. During these years her parents developed an "affliction" and then Nancy herself became sick. Later on, Mr. Allen said, when Nancy turned to her hens, she would not keep a rooster. When she wanted to raise chicks she bought fertile eggs. Nancy, an enlightened keeper of poultry, doubtless knew that the way to get egg production was to keep roosters out of the flock. She must have known hens are more docile, manageable and even affectionate when cocks are not running among them. But it also seems that deprived as she was, she did not want to see romance in the barnyard. With her hens and cow Nancy had, in fact, established a kind of nunnery.

From horses to hens seems to tell both

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the outer and inner story of Nancy's life. The horse stands for aggression, power and sex. The hen, on the other hand, symbolizes withdrawal. It represents mother, a fussy and worrisome mother, or it may signify a child. In her poem, "No Comfort," Nancy wrote:

I have had horses to run with me,
So that the ground looked
All in black and white streaks.
There never was a horse
That ever started me from their back;
Now I am deprived from all comforts of life.

The doctor who helped and patched along Nancy's complaints was a neighbor and Vineyarder, William H. Luce, an 1840 graduate of the Medical School of Bowdoin College. Luce in the early nineteenth century was the surname most often encountered on Martha's Vineyard. If all named Luce shared a common ancestor, there nevertheless were Luces and Luces. William H. Luce and Nancy Luce belonged to separate families.

Dr. Luce, who was six years older than Nancy, had his home and apothecary's shop in the village, near William Rotch's store, less than two miles from Tiah's Cove. All her adult years Nancy took him her problems. From time to time she would write and send him by hand a letter. In 1860, when she was forty and getting ready to declare herself, that is, have her poems printed, she consulted him about an important matter.

Sep 25 1860

Dr W H Luce
I want to know how your health is.
Another thing is, you willing to be so kind as to let me know how to spell the names of my poor deceased friends, do you know certain how to spell them to be on sure grounds to always have them sounded out on a, just as I used to speak them, if I put a to the end of their names as I used to do, they will sound them on r, that must not be. I used to spell them Ada Queta, Beauty Lina, now I spell them Ady Queety, Beauty Linny. I aint suited yet, to spell them right, to have them sounded out on a. If you know, do be so kind as to write them to me on this paper.

Nancy Luce

Nancy, not surprisingly, had an ear for speech as it was spoken. She knew Tiah's was to most Vineyarders Tyer's; Martha's was pronounced as if spelled Mather's. Like any serious poet she took pains with her words which were meant to be audible and spoken.

Dr. Luce, as requested, replied on the same sheet of paper:

If you wish to sound the a *long* you must put the mark over it so—ā—that indicated that it is sounded as in day bay etc & not like r—as in short a. Or you can add the y or—ie—is very fashionable now as—*Addie Queetie, Beautie Linnie,* the *ie* here sounds like long e—

In haste
W H Luce

Twice Nancy wrote to Dr. Luce; "I give you this letter, for you to keep to remember me by, and let folks read it." When, many years after Dr. Luce died, his house passed into the hands of a grandson, thirteen letters from Nancy went with it, and these letters survive. Let folks read it. What the words are saying is let the world know what my life was like. Hear me across the chasm.

Nancy also wrote to the *Vineyard Gazette* and those letters, half a dozen of them, are found in the newspaper's files. On 25 January 1861 the weekly carried a proud boast from West Tisbury.

Mr. Editor. I send you a piece for you to put in your paper if you please, without charging it to me. My pullets commenced laying four months of age. My bantie sort lay as well in winter as they do in summer. They must have good fine meal scalded with milk, and good southern corn, and warm milk to drink in winter, and a warm clean house. Take good care of your hens, or you can't have eggs. In summer they must have good southern corn and good fine meal scalded with milk, and eat it cold. Be good to your hens and not cruel. Consider how you would feel if you could not help yourselves, and folks was cruel to you and let you suffer. I have kept about 8 hens which layed rising 1500 eggs a year.

Nancy Luce

Almost two hundred eggs per bird was in those days outstanding annual production. Nancy not only managed her flock but also

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felt called on to take the pulpit, giving farmers useful information and preaching kindness—to "dumb creatures and helpless human, too."

Whether writing poems, letters or farm lore, or fragments of autobiography, Nancy aims to talk to the reader and tell him things she believes he should know.

My poor father used to own English meadow, [she wrote in one of her little journals] but his sickness and my mother's sickness a number of years caused him to sell all his English meadow and part of his wood-land and clear land and sheep and creatures etc to get money to pay a number of doctors and folks . . . year after year, the most of this when I was a little girl. See what sickness is.

Sown areas of upland meadow were called English meadow, the crop when harvested, English hay. By searching land records in the Dukes County Courthouse I checked on this and similar claims made by Nancy. I found her wholly reliable.

There was also another kind of record I ran onto in the Courthouse. While many she lived among thought well of Nancy, the selectmen in 1848—she was then twenty-eight—believed her out of her mind. They petitioned the court to appoint a guardian for her so that she might not become a charge on the town. The judge, after hearing what certain neighbors and Dr. Luce had to say, ruled in Nancy's favor. She remained her own mistress, going her own way, farming, writing, communing with whom she chose to commune with.

Cousins on the distaff side proved solid friends. Nancy's mother, Anna Manter Luce, was the daughter of an early George Manter and his wife, Sarah Athearn Manter. Through her mother Nancy related to two of Tisbury's leading tribes. She may have been kin to Jenny Lind Athearn, a nineteenth-century Vineyard lady and inhabitant of Scrubby Neck, who belted out hymns at the pasture gate to call the cattle home.

"To George W. Manter of Tisbury, who is the man to see to my graves, all the rest and residue of my Estate both Real and Personal," Nancy stated. The rest and residue consisted of unpublished photographs and poems not included in the literary remains. From Nancy's cousin, George Whitten Manter, they passed to his son, Daniel Manter.

Among the Manter memorabilia is a moth-eaten photograph of Nancy seated outside by the open front door of her house. On her left, head down, stands an ill-favored cow. Built like a beef breed more than a dairy cow—body short and thick, coat rough and udder misshapen, the critter looks like a piney woods scrub. Is she, perchance, the cow named by Nancy, Red Cannon, and to whom she wrote on a scrap of brown paper the unpublished poem, in the Manter Collection, "Red Cannon's Failings"?

Loud noise. Keep their noise going.
Won't eat blackgrass hay.
Raven for company
Won't come to be milked.
Go dry half their time when with calf.
Kick. Fluk.
Give little milk. Thin milk.
Rank milk. Hold up her milk.
Milk sour quick. Milk hard.
Horns long forward or turn back.
Horns large. Horns sprawl out to sides.
Hook me. Red cow.
Cream go up top in one night, milk not fit to use.
One part of cow large.
Skittish.
Jump. Hook down fence.
Mash down fence.
Run head through fence.
Meet cattle to fence and hook it down and won't come away.
Can't be governed when she has unclean spirit in her.
Short teats,
Bloody milk.

Was this the "wonderful N L cow" that Joshua Slocum wrote Clifton Johnson about? It does not matter. Not many poets celebrate ornery cows. Not many write of the wit of hens. Nancy's original, and in that sense primitive, view, her subtle syncopation, her discordant grammar but concordant style may leave a small but enduring trace on a landscape where time is always past and landmarks rapidly vanishing.

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Cargoes

ELIZABETH STANTON HARDY

Time grows sluggish, purples through the veins;
slowly on beleaguered mind
move ships of thought. Vessels moor
in harbors, patterned long ago,
rust at anchor, a wind can neither shift nor change.
So, after a weedy drag of years
the brain, long a Sargasso Sea,
lets no vagrant dock, no stranger sailing
from lanes of wild uncharted water.

Slipping through fog, the casual sail of youth
has no set calendar or nation.
The ship aslant with dissonant truth
awash with revelation—
anchors unseen—from countries of the sun.

ELIZABETH STANTON HARDY, whose verse has appeared in the SCHOLAR from time to time, has been a teacher of modern poetry technique for many years. Her first book of verse, *Time in the Turning*, was published in 1940.

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OF MEN AND BOOKS

Writers and Publishers

CHARLES A. MADISON

Perhaps the most gratifying reward of book publishing is the intimate friendship of authors of distinction. Charles Scribner, who inherited his father's business in 1879, when he was twenty-three years old, manifested for a half century the imagination and energy and high ethics that made his house one of the most successful and respected firms in publishing. In the process he enjoyed the cordiality and confidence of many of his eminent authors. And it was he, in his old age encrusted in Victorian gentility and jealous of the moral purity of his imprint, who had the vision and the astuteness to disregard the critical objections of W. C. Brownell and Robert Bridges, his distinguished conservative editors, and yield to the urging of Maxwell Perkins, the younger editor who was sympathetically attuned to the unrestrained but fresh writing of the 1920's. The relations between several authors and the Scribner firm exemplify the growing intimacy, the pleasures and disappointments, and the close interdependence that a publisher experiences in dealing with his important writers.

Governed by a high ethical code, Charles Scribner refused to disregard the obsolescent "courtesy" principle, which kept a publisher from poaching on the published authors of another firm. As early as 1906 he had the opportunity of acquiring John Galsworthy as an author. Paul R. Reynolds submitted to him the manuscript of *The Man of Property,* but Scribner refused to take the author away from Putnam. Four years later when James Pinker, Galsworthy's new agent, again approached him, Scribner replied: "We are interested in Mr. Galsworthy's work but do not wish to interfere in any way in his relations with the Putnams. If he is determined to leave them, for reasons of his own, independent of any offer from us, we should of course be glad to negotiate with him." He intimated that he would offer fifteen percent royalty up to five thousand copies and twenty percent thereafter.

Pinker assured him that Galsworthy "has made up his mind to change publishers in the United States . . . and has authorized me to make arrangements with you for the future." Two months later, again reassured, Scribner told Pinker that he would be glad to publish Galsworthy's work, "and you would be sure of our best efforts, for we think this author's books harmonize well with our other publications." Thus began his publication of the novels, plays, essays, short stories and poems written by Galsworthy. He also took over the novels on the Putnam list and issued them under his own imprint.

A felicitous author-publisher relationship soon developed between Galsworthy and Scribner and continued to the end of their lives. *The Patrician,* published in 1911, sold well; two years later *The Dark Flower* did even better. Informing Galsworthy that *The Dark Flower* had sold fourteen thousand copies by November 1913, Scribner added, "It is still going strong and I have little doubt that before Christmas we shall

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✪ For almost forty years CHARLES A. MADISON worked in an editorial executive capacity at Henry Holt and Company, retiring in 1962. He has contributed articles and reviews to leading periodicals and is the author of three books on social history. This article is an adaptation by Mr. Madison of a part of his forthcoming book, *Book Publishing in Cultural America,* to be published by McGraw-Hill.

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have passed the sale of *The Patrician* of which I find we have printed altogether 17,110." Galsworthy was delighted with "the cheering news. . . . In some ways I think it's my best work, and I'm happy in thinking it is liked."

When the war broke out in 1914, Galsworthy was deeply concerned and wrote about it in an effort to build up English morale. His income from this writing he contributed to "Relief Funds," and he was grateful to Scribner for the high fees. At the same time Pinker requested fifteen hundred pounds for the serial rights to *The Freelands,* which Scribner paid. When Bridges, then editor of *Scribner's Magazine,* asked Galsworthy to delete a paragraph as "too frank for reading in public," Galsworthy acquiesced but regretted that "what is probably a real piece of scientific discovery, administered in delicate jam, should have to be withheld from your reading public. And I reserve all rights in my contribution to man's knowledge of his origin."

In 1915 *Cosmopolitan* outbid *Scribner's* by offering Galsworthy thirty pounds per thousand words for three serials. In explaining his decision to Charles Scribner, Galsworthy assured him, "It is a very great comfort and pleasure to me to be published by your firm—the best in America, and I am more than pleased with all you have done for my work in the States." In 1917 Pinker demanded the top royalty of twenty percent and an advance of three hundred pounds on a volume of short stories—and got them. Scribner at the time told Galsworthy that "the market for certain books seems to be as large as ever in spite of the war."

With the fighting ended, Galsworthy came to the United States on a lecture tour that netted him nearly twenty thousand dollars. Scribner saw a good deal of him, and their friendship became intimate. *Saint's Progress* appeared in 1919 and sold over thirty-five thousand copies in less than a year. Scribner wrote: "This is greater than that of any other of your books in an equal period . . ." Galsworthy informed him that the American sale was about three times as much as that in England.

In December 1920 Bridges again asked Galsworthy to omit a "frank" passage. Galsworthy told Scribner that Bridges "could delete the words 'all the unappeased sexual instincts of' from the text, leaving the sentence 'and June ached at its liveliness.' I do this in deference to your wish." He was convinced, however, "that starved sexual instinct *is* responsible for very much emotional vagary in many directions."

In Chancery was issued in 1921 and sold well. Meantime there was much correspondence—some with Maxwell Perkins but mostly with Scribner—concerning a one-volume edition of *The Forsythe Saga* and a limited edition of his writings. The first project was particularly dear to Galsworthy, as he wished to be remembered by it. "I always held that a writer goes down the ages identified with one book."

Scribner and Galsworthy—and their wives—visited one another in the United States and in England. When Galsworthy needed financial advice, he turned to Scribner, and the latter gave it to him with the help of his banker. Ready to invest in American securities, Galsworthy asked Charles Scribner to withhold his semiannual royalties and tell him how to invest them. "I want something absolutely safe equivalent to our Government securities—nothing industrial." Scribner bought five thousand dollars worth of government bonds in Galsworthy's name.

In 1923 Galsworthy accepted Bridges' offer for the serial rights to *The White Monkey* and wrote to Scribner, "The pleasure of being in *Scribner's* outweighed commercial lures." For the book rights he received a straight twenty percent royalty and an advance of a thousand pounds. In November 1924 Perkins wrote to him: "I've been impatiently waiting the moment when I could write that the sale of *The White Monkey* had passed the highest point reached by any of your earlier books, and now it has come. Today the number sold is barely short of 35,000. We have printed 80,000 and we are advertising heavily."

Scribner's inability to compete with the mass-circulation journals for the serial rights to Galsworthy's fiction could not but strain their cordial relations. Yet Scribner

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tried to accept the situation gracefully. To Galsworthy he wrote in July 1925, "Whatever is best for you is satisfactory to me." He pointed out, however, that serialization in a magazine with a large readership like the *Ladies Home Journal* would hurt the sale of *The Silver Spoon*. To Pinker he wrote the following week: "Of course any decision Mr. Galsworthy makes would be accepted by us—as cheerfully as possible." In this instance the book went to *Scribner's*.

Galsworthy was getting wealthy from his royalties. In November 1926 Scribner paid him an advance of four thousand pounds on the lower-priced Devon Edition of his writings. He was also informed that *The White Monkey* had sold 108,865 copies and *The Silver Spoon* 47,146 copies—and that these sales were to increase considerably in 1927. Galsworthy was pleased, but he informed Scribner that he simply could not refuse the offer of eight thousand pounds for the serial rights to his new novel. Two years later Scribner paid him $14,250 on the first printing of the Compact Edition of his works and a like amount some months later on the second printing. Meanwhile *The Forsythe Saga* and *The Caravan* were selling in large numbers.

In May 1927 Charles Scribner wrote to Galsworthy that his three-week sojourn in Italy had not benefited him. "There is nothing seriously wrong with me but my strength and nerves seem to have collapsed." He added that he was grateful that his son had become "very active in the business and is a great help to me." When Scribner died in May 1930, Galsworthy felt he had lost an intimate friend. The shock was even greater when Arthur Scribner died two years later. "He was always so kind to us," he wrote to Maxwell Perkins. Galsworthy's relations with Perkins and the younger Charles Scribner were cordial, but he was already then too old to develop the kind of intimacy that had existed between him and the late Scribner.

Scribner's Magazine, started in 1886, was more closely connected with the firm's book division than *Harper's* or *Atlantic Monthly* were with the book departments of their respective publishers. Charles Scribner was eager to keep it both profitable and a feeder of authors to his book division. He had complete confidence in Edward L. Burlingame, its energetic and enterprising editor, and the latter respected his employer's integrity and judgment. Around 1900 *Scribner's* had a circulation of nearly two hundred thousand and published the leading authors of the day. In 1914 Robert Bridges succeeded Burlingame as editor, but by that time the magazine was already losing ground.

Edith Wharton came to the Scribner firm through the magazine and most of her early writings were published there before they went into her books. But Charles Scribner was much less happy in his relations with her than he was with Galsworthy. For all her feminine gentility she fought for every penny she could get out of her pen. Her first response to being published by the prominent house was one of gratitude. In *A Backward Glance* (1934) she wrote that Edward Burlingame "became one of my most helpful guides in the world of letters. He not only accepted my verses, but (oh, rapture!) wanted to know what else I had written. . . . It was naturally to him that I turned after Macmillan's rejection of *The Decoration of Houses*. Brownell [the editor of the book division] accepted it." In 1893 she wrote to Scribner: "I shall never forget your encouraging kindness to me ever since my first literary endeavor had the good fortune to fall into your hands." Six years later, however, when *The Greater Inclination* was published, she complained that the novel received too little advertising—not nearly, that is, as much as other publishers were spending on their books. "Certainly," she continued to her editor, Brownell, "in these days of energetic and emphatic advertising, Mr. Scribner's methods do not tempt one to offer him one's wares a second time." Not long after she informed Brownell that another publisher had offered her a royalty of fifteen percent on her next book. Scribner was reluctant to give that much to a new author, but he did not want to lose her and acquiesced.

The popularity of *The House of Mirth*,

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serialized in *Scribner's* and published in October 1905, made her even more demanding. To Brownell she wrote: "As to terms, it seems to me that the incipient popularity of *The House of Mirth* might permit me to name $5000 . . . and perhaps you would think it reasonable, if the sale of the volume exceeds 10,000 to raise the royalties to 20%." Whether or not Scribner thought it reasonable, he gave her what she asked. After the novel had sold thirty thousand copies in three weeks, he was pleased to tell her, "I do not remember that we have ever published any book the sale of which has been so rapid."

Mrs. Wharton had difficulty writing her next book. Edward Burlingame, who wanted it for *Scribner's,* prodded her with notes of entreaty and encouragement, which she appreciated. "You will never know," she wrote on August 30, 1906, "what a slough that note of yours dragged me out of." Seven months later: "I appreciate so much the trouble you take in writing me, at various stages of the work, and giving me your impressions so fully and so sympathetically." When *The Fruit of the Tree* appeared late in 1907, it sold relatively poorly. Scribner tried to comfort her by putting the blame on the current economic depression. He also expressed his enthusiasm over the outline of her new book, *The Custom of the Country*: "A story from you with such a presentation of contemporary society and such a girl from the West climbing into it would be sure of its interest and readers. I *could* not let it go elsewhere—even for the magazine." Illness in the family and other interruptions kept her from completing the novel till 1913. In the interim she wrote her brief masterpiece, *Ethan Frome,* in addition to other works.

Published on September 30, 1911, *Ethan Frome* sold only forty-two hundred copies the first two months. Mrs. Wharton did not hesitate to express her chagrined disappointment to Scribner. He did his best to explain and to pacify her. Telling her that the firm was promoting the book energetically, that the reviews were favorable, he wrote, "and undoubtedly the more discriminating readers have bought it eagerly but we have not secured for it the interest of the large public which supports the best-sellers." Her response was that the book was inadequately advertised. "The fact is," he assured her in reply, "we spent much more upon it than we can afford on a book selling at that price and very much more than we spend on most full sized novels."

Not satisfied with this explanation and blaming Scribner and not the book for its relatively small sale, she did what Galsworthy would never have done—gave her next book to another publisher. In May 1912 she wrote blithely to Scribner: "Since I last wrote you I have received from Messrs. Appleton a very high offer for a novel. As I was just finishing the short novel I have been working on during the last year . . . I have decided to give them the tale in question." Four weeks later Scribner replied: "It has taken me a month to recover from the shock caused by your announcement that you had arranged with Appleton for the publication of your next book."

Having received an advance of five thousand dollars on *The Custom of the Country,* which Scribner published in 1913, Mrs. Wharton informed Scribner that Appleton's advance on *The Reef* was fifteen thousand and that she expected similar amounts on her future books. Scribner felt cornered. "The advance paid by the Appletons seems to me very large and I question whether the book has yet yielded that much in royalty. . . . I hope you think $10,000 sufficient. I cannot remember that we ever advanced as much as that on any novel." Mrs. Wharton also wanted more for the serial rights in the magazine and informed Scribner that she had been offered $12,500 for her next serial and doubted if he cared to meet it. He did, but again added that it "was a little more than we have ever paid." When Edgar Sisson of *Cosmopolitan* offered her fifteen thousand dollars for a serial, she sent his letter to Scribner, who admitted defeat and told her he would not hold her to her previous promise but hoped she would let him publish the book.

Magazine schedules, Mrs. Wharton's literary fecundity, the hazards of war, and chiefly the absence of mutual goodwill—all

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conspired to widen the break between Mrs. Wharton and Scribner. She was writing more than *Scribner's* could use, and Scribner was too scrupulous to obtain book rights to a manuscript by selling serial rights to another periodical. When he did offer to do that in 1918, she was already committed to Appleton by accepting another advance of fifteen thousand. Shortly after *The Age of Innocence* became her most popular novel, Scribner wrote to her in February 1921: "I should so much prize an opportunity to talk with you about your work, for I have not abandoned the hope of securing future novels. The loss of your books was the greatest blow given to my pride as a publisher."

They did meet that summer in Paris, and she agreed to give him *A Son at the Front,* a war novel which *Scribner's* serialized and the firm published in 1923. It did only moderately well. Scribner continued to woo her, offering twenty thousand for the magazine serial rights to her next book, but he was given no more fiction. The last book of hers on the Scribner list was *The Writing of Fiction,* a group of essays which appeared first in *Scribner's* and as a book in 1926.

George Santayana was an ideal author: thoroughly loyal and not in the least money-minded. From the time Charles Scribner accepted his poems and published *The Sense of Beauty* in 1896 until his death more than a half century later, the relationship between the two was most congenial. When Santayana completed a book, he sent the manuscript to Scribner, confident that it would be accepted and published. On his part, Scribner was pleased to bring out everything Santayana sent him. None of the philosophical works had a wide market, but all sold steadily and proved profitable.

In the late 1920's Santayana began to write a novel. John Hall Wheelock, his editor at Scribner, encouraged him but doubted that so philosophical a thinker could write popular fiction. The novel was finished in 1934, published the next year, and became one of the leading best sellers of the year. *The Last Puritan* was selected by the Book-of-the-Month Club, which gave Santayana five thousand dollars as his share, and sold around one hundred and fifty thousand copies in a year of depressed commerce. Charles Scribner, Jr., wrote to him: "No novel published in the twenty-odd years that I have been in the business has had such an enthusiastic reception from the press, which has showered it with praise without a dissenting note."

Santayana was not averse to praise, but he was too well aware of the ephemeral nature of popularity to feel flattered. He was more concerned with what was said of him on the book's jacket. Although he did not complain directly to Scribner, he did write to a friend: "The dust-jacket is hideous and full of false, low-class tittle-tattle about myself, with a horrible cross-eyed ferocious drawing apparently after my last photo, but very ill-drawn."

At Wheelock's urging Scribner decided to take advantage of Santayana's current popularity and bring out the deluxe Triton Edition of his complete writings. Wheelock also succeeded, with Padraic Colum's help and the cooperation of the Catholic Church and the American Embassy in Rome, in getting the manuscript of the first volume of *Persons and Places* out of war-ridden Italy. It was published in 1944 and was a selection of the Book-of-the-Month Club. The remaining two volumes came after long intervals and were also well received. In 1950 the first part of *Dominations and Powers* reached Wheelock. His acknowledgment was in character: "It was an important day in the history of the House of Scribner when the manuscript of Book One of *Dominations and Powers* reached my desk. . . . I took the manuscript home with me at once and read it with the greatest delight and excitement."

In 1910 Maxwell E. Perkins was employed in the advertising department, and four years later he was made an editor. A Harvard University graduate, he found the firm a Princeton stronghold. He differed from his colleagues in a deeper sense: they were older and provincial in outlook, while he sympathized with the young writers who were trying to emancipate themselves and

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American literature from the fetters of deferential gentility. The Scribner firm was in fact a citadel of smug complacency in the early years of the century. According to Malcolm Cowley, it was "the most genteel and the most tradition-encrusted of all the publishing houses that had survived from the Victorian days. No word unfit for a young girl's ear could appear in a book that Scribner's published." One of Perkins' first disappointments was Brownell's rejection of Van Wyck Brooks's *America's Coming-of-Age* "because it swept these fellows [older American writers] into the dust-bin of the past with a contemptuous gesture." Priding itself on its distinguished list of English and American writers, the firm avoided involvement with the raw and realistic new authors like Dreiser, Frank Norris, David Graham Phillips and Carl Sandburg.

Perkins was not intimidated by his august seniors. Much as he respected Scribner's judgment, he knew fresh writing when he saw it and kept recommending its acceptance. In time he battered down all opposition. As Cowley put it: "The firm took a sudden leap from the age of innocence into the middle of the lost generation. The leap was the result, for the most part, of Perkins' urging, but he made his suggestions so quietly that hardly anybody noticed what was happening." Perkins was not deceived by mediocre or inconsequential writing. In 1924 he read the manuscript of Bruce Barton's *The Man Nobody Knows* and told Scribner that the book would sell but that it had made Jesus a supersalesman and was not up to the firm's standard. Scribner let him reject it. When the book became a best seller, Scribner reminded him of the rejection. Perkins countered by repeating his prediction of its popularity. Whereupon Scribner exclaimed, with a twinkle in his eye, that he had not been told it would sell one hundred thousand!

In 1917 Shane Leslie, who had been one of F. Scott Fitzgerald's teachers at Newman School, brought the first version of *This Side of Paradise* to Scribner. Perkins read it with sympathetic interest but considered the writing immature and in need of revision and polishing. Fitzgerald, who was then in the armed forces, asked Perkins to submit the manuscript to two other publishers. Perkins did so, and both rejected it. When the war ended, Perkins urged Fitzgerald to revise the novel and let him see it again. In September 1919 the rewritten manuscript reached him. Two weeks later Perkins accepted it, having persuaded Scribner that the firm should publish the novel despite its free use of language and its war-loosened morality.

Perkins' task was not easy. Charles Scribner considered the book frivolous and insisted on keeping his imprint dignified and beyond reproach. But Perkins was certain of the book's merits and maintained his position firmly, if patiently. Wheelock described the scene some years later: "Mr. Perkins said nothing. There was a long, very awkward pause. Mr. Scribner said, 'you don't agree, do you?' Mr. Perkins then said, 'I believe that a publisher's first allegiance is to talent. If we aren't going to publish a talent like this, it is a very serious thing.'"

To Fitzgerald Perkins wrote: "I am glad, personally, to be able to write to you that we are all for publishing your book. . . . The book is so different that it is hard to prophesy how it will sell, but we are all for taking a chance and supporting it with vigor." Fitzgerald was in ecstasy at the news. The book was published in March 1920 and sold a total of fifty-two thousand copies.

Fitzgerald was in need of a lot of money to satisfy his extravagant tastes and marital plans, and Scribner advanced him a good amount. In 1921, when the sale of his first book began to slacken, Fitzgerald complained about the "ultra-conservatism" of Scribner's "marketing and editorial policies" and praised Alfred Knopf for his aggressive promotion. When Perkins criticized a passage on religion in his new manuscript, Fitzgerald balked. "Please write me frankly as I have you—and tell me if you are speaking for yourself, for the Scribner Company, or for the public. I am rather upset about the whole thing." Perkins replied promptly:

Don't ever *defer* to my judgment. You won't on any vital point, I know, and I should be ashamed, if it were possible to have made you;

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for a critic of any account must speak solely for himself. . . . My point is that you impair the effectiveness of the passage—of the very purpose you use it for—by giving it that quality of contempt, and I wish you would try so to revise it as not to antagonize even the very people who agree with the substance of it.

In 1922 Scribner published *The Beautiful and the Damned* as well as *Tales of the Jazz Age*. The novel, dedicated to Perkins, sold forty-four thousand copies. Fitzgerald was now deeply devoted to Perkins. He urged upon him every writer of promise with whom he associated, among them Hemingway and Ring Lardner. He was writing *The Great Gatsby* and fed his ego upon Perkins' letters, at once sympathetic, laudatory, and yet incisively critical. In December 1924 he wrote to Perkins: "With the aid you've given me I can make *Gatsby* perfect. . . . Anyhow . . . I'm a wonderful writer and its your always wonderful letters that help me to go on believing in myself." In nearly all his letters to Perkins he asked numerous questions to which he wanted specific replies; he revealed his abnormally hectic mode of life, his constant need of money, and his panicky concern about emendations and corrections. His excessive spending forced him to write stories for the popular magazines, for which he received high fees. In April 1925 he told Perkins, "If it will support me with no more intervals of trash I'll go on as a novelist. If not, I'm going to quit, come home, go to Hollywood and learn the movie business. I can't reduce our scale of living and I can't stand this financial insecurity."

A year later, with *Gatsby* selling well, Fitzgerald wrote to Charles Scribner how pleased he was to have earned the advances made to him during the previous four years. "But in another sense I shall always be in your debt—for your unfailing kindness and confidence and obligingness to me in all my exigencies during that time. Never once was I reminded of my obligations, which were sometimes as high as $4000, with no book in sight." He did not remain financially fluid for long. His extravagances, his tragic experiences with his wife Zelda, and his inability for long periods to write much, combined to keep him ever in need of money. His agent and Perkins helped him all they could. In December 1933 Fitzgerald wrote to Perkins: "Your offering to loan me another thousand dollars was the kindest thing I ever heard of. It certainly comes at the most opportune time."

The relative failure of *Tender Is the Night* deepened his feeling of frustration. In October 1934 he admitted to Perkins: "The mood of terrible depression and despair is not going to become a characteristic and I am ashamed and felt very yellow about it afterwards. But to deny that such moods come increasingly would be futile." His condition did not improve: liquor, illness, and literary disappointments often made him miserable. Work in Hollywood in the frantic effort to bolster his finances did not improve his morale. Perkins remained his faithful friend and adviser. In 1939, wishing to send him a word of cheer, Perkins returned to him a letter about *Gatsby*. "You might want to have it for some reason. What a pleasure it was to publish that! It was as perfect a book as I ever had any share in publishing. One does not seem to get such satisfactions as that any more." Two years later Fitzgerald was dead, a heart attack ending his frustrated life at forty-four years of age.

More than most writers, Fitzgerald was interested in the work of others, rejoicing in their success and sympathizing with their failures. When he met a writer he liked he wanted to see him published. In October 1924 he wrote to Perkins from Paris: "This is to tell you about a young man named Ernest Hemingway, who lives in Paris (an American) writes for the *Transatlantic Review* and has a brilliant future. . . . I'd look him up right away. He's the real thing." Perkins wrote to Hemingway, but Horace Liveright had cabeled and was given *In Our Time*. Fitzgerald did not give up. In April 1925 he informed Perkins, "Hemingway is a fine charming fellow and he appreciated your letter and the tone of it enormously. If Liveright doesn't please him he'll come to you, and he has a future." Several months later, when Liveright rejected *Torrents of*

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Spring, a travesty on Sherwood Anderson, then one of Liveright's popular authors, Hemingway considered at first going to Harcourt who he thought "might be less conservative in regard to certain somewhat broad scenes," but at Fitzgerald's urging went to Perkins. It was not easy for Perkins to persuade Scribner to publish a book containing four-letter words and dialogue that crackled with obscenity, but he persisted until the elderly publisher gave way, for Perkins could be dogged in his defense of a writer who felt the need of using such language. "But if they belong, if they are the the words that would actually be used in the circumstances of the book, then artistically they should be used, and an author feels as if he's playing false in evading them." Fitzgerald was delighted. "I'm glad you got Hemingway. I saw him for a day in Paris on his return and he thought you were great."

Thus began a relationship that became intimate and mutually fruitful. Unlike Fitzgerald and Tom Wolfe, Hemingway was completely self-reliant and in little need of the kind of help Perkins gave so generously to others. Yet he felt very close to Perkins and said in an interview that Perkins "never asked me to change anything I wrote except to remove certain words which were not then publishable. Blanks were left, and anyone who knew the words would know what they were. For me he was not an editor. He was a wise friend and wonderful companion." To get Perkins away from his work, he would invite him to fish with him in Florida and threaten to consider the offers of other publishers if he did not come. Thus in 1929 Perkins told Galsworthy that he was going to Florida to visit Hemingway, "who has finished a new novel and says—he is, of course, very much pressed by all the publishers—'if you don't come down and get it, you can't have it.'"

Perkins' relations with at least a dozen talented writers were similarly close and stimulating. His encompassing appreciation and incisive, if tentative, criticism was of invaluable assistance to those who needed his guidance. He knew that many writers lacked confidence when working on a book and he sought to instill self-reliance by both advice and encouragement. Yet his criticism was given "reluctantly and fearfully," and only when the author requested it. Believing "that a publisher's first allegiance is to talent, which is rare and valuable," he was very much interested in young authors. To James Boyd he wrote in December 1924: "It is with them that our great hopes lie. We know what the old authors can do and, though some of them do admirably, they seldom surprise us. But the young writers may do anything—at least several of them may, and you are certainly one of the several."

Of all the authors Perkins nursed and encouraged, Tom Wolfe was the most conspicuous and the most difficult. His talent as a writer was as great as his body was huge; indeed everything about him—his appetite as much as his emotions, his egotism no less than his gratitude—was of gigantic proportions. In 1928 he was in Europe, deeply dejected over his apparent failure as a writer. His plays had found no producer, and his fiction had been rejected by several publishers. Madeleine Boyd, his agent, then sent the manuscript of his novel to Perkins. It was huge, amorphous, greatly overwritten, but Perkins perceived the pulse of art throbbing through the pages and wrote Wolfe of his interest and of his wish to see him on his return. Wolfe replied:

> I can't tell you how good your letter has made me feel. Your words of praise filled me with hope. . . . I have no right to expect others to do for me what I should do for myself, but, although I am able to criticize wordiness and overabundance in others, I am not able practically to criticize it in myself. The business of selection and revision is simply hell for me—my efforts to cut out 50,000 words may sometimes result in my adding 75,000.

He hoped that someone at Scribner's would give him detailed criticism. To his enormous gratification Perkins did just that, page after page, giving many days to this personal explication and guidance. Wolfe was profundly appreciative. To a former

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teacher he wrote that Scribner was ready to do much more for him than he had dared hope.

I saw now that Perkins had a great batch of notes in his hand and that on the desk was a great stack of handwritten paper—a complete summary of my whole enormous book. I was so moved and touched to think that someone at length had thought enough of my work to sweat over it in this way that I almost wept. . . . For the first time in my life I was getting criticism I could really use—the scenes he wanted cut or changed were invariably the least essential and the least interesting—all the scenes that I had thought too coarse, vulgar, profane or obscene for publication he forbade me to touch save a word or two. . . . He said the book was new and original, and because of its form could have no formal or orthodox unity.

Scribner's contract gave Wolfe ten percent of the first two thousand copies and fifteen percent thereafter, with an advance of five hundred dollars. He was very pleased and revised the manuscript with Perkins' help. To his sister he wrote in May 1929: "We are cutting out big chunks, and my heart bleeds to see it go, but it's die dog or eat the hatchet. . . . I have great confidence in him and I usually yield to his judgment." What delighted him was Perkins' assurance that Scribner would publish all his books. On December 24, with the revision of *Look Homeward, Angel* done, Wolfe wrote to Perkins: "you have done what I had ceased to believe one person could do for another —you have created liberty and hope for me. . . . I am honored to think I may call you my friend, and I wish to send you on Christmas Day this statement of my loyal affection."

Scribner now offered Wolfe a monthly advance of two hundred and fifty dollars for eighteen months to facilitate the writing of his next book, and he went to England for that purpose. Perkins advised him in June 1930, "When you get down to work, just do the work the best you can. Don't ever think about the public, or the critics, or any of those things. You are a born writer if ever there was one and I have no worry about whether this new book will be as good as the *Angel,* and that sort of thing." Some critical reviews, however, greatly disturbed Wolfe and he informed Perkins he would not write any more. Eager to cheer and reassure him, Perkins wrote: "Certainly there never was a man who had made more of an impression on the best judges with a single book, and at so early an age."

No amount of encouragement kept Wolfe from sinking into the depths of dejection. He wrote a great deal spasmodically, but the material was amorphous and consisted of several different themes. Whether at home or abroad he suffered from seizures of depression, almost of despair. Perkins did his utmost to bolster his ego and stimulate his interest in completing a single book. In January 1932 he wrote to Hemingway: "You asked about Tom Wolfe. He has accomplished a great volume of work, and what I've seen of it, not much, is as good as it could be. He keeps getting all upset, and he is so now, and I am to have an evening with him and try to make him think he is some good again. He is good all right."

For many months that year and the next Perkins and Wolfe spent nearly every evening organizing, revising and cutting the mountain of manuscript before them. That June, Perkins described an incident to Hemingway:

A couple of nights ago, I told Tom that a whole lot of fine stuff he had in simply ought to come out because it resulted in blurring a very important effect. Literally, we sat here for an hour thereafter without saying a word, while Tom glowered and pondered and fidgeted in his chair. Then he said, "well, then will you take the responsibility?" And I said, "I have simply got to take the responsibility. And what's more," I said, "I will be blamed, either way."

Wolfe, distressed as he was over the cutting and rewriting, fully appreciated Perkins' help. To a friend he wrote: "He has sweated and labored and lavished untold care and patience upon this huge manuscript of mine. There is no adequate way in which I can ever express my gratefulness." He did so in his dedication in the

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new book, which appeared in March 1933:

To Maxwell Evarts Perkins, a great editor and a brave and honest man, who stuck to the writer of this book through times of bitter hopelessness and doubt and would not let him give in to his own despair, a work to be known as *Of Time and the River* is dedicated with the hope that all of it may be in some way worthy of the loyal devotion and the patient care which a dauntless and unshaken friend has given to each part of it, and without which none of it could have been written.

Perkins did not see the dedication until it was in print, and wrote to Wolfe in Paris: "I can think of nothing that would have made me more happy. . . . I think it a most generous and noble utterance. Certainly for one who could say that of me I ought to have done all that it says I did do." And shortly after publication he cabled: "Grand excited reception in all reviews. Talked of everywhere as truly great book. All comparisons with greatest writers. Enjoy yourself with light heart." He subsequently informed Wolfe that the novel was on the best-seller list.

The tragedy of Wolfe's literary life had now reached its climax. The next three years—his last—were a period of vexation, suspicion, quarreling and rupture. It began with his resentment at not receiving top royalty for *Story of a Novel* and at being charged twelve hundred dollars for excessive author's alterations in the proofs of *Of Time and the River*. Perkins gave him the increase in royalty but reminded him that on a brief work of this kind the limited sale did not warrant such royalty. He also assured him that corrections in proof above the usual allowance were always charged to the author. Wolfe did not see it that way —a common failing in authors. "I do say that you cannot command the loyalty and devotion of a man on the one hand and then take a business advantage of him on the other." Two days later, however, he wrote: "All the damn contracts in the world don't mean as much to me as your friendship means. . . I am now started on another book. I need your friendship and support more than I ever did, so please forget the worst mistakes I have made in the past and let's see if I can't do something better in the future."

Bernard De Voto's carping review of *The Story of a Novel,* stating that Wolfe could not write a book without the help of "Mr. Perkins and the assembly-line at Scribner's," stabbed deep into Wolfe's vanity. Perkins tried to ease his mind about the slur: "No understanding person could believe that it affected the book in any serious or important way—that it was much more than mechanical help." A little later, however, when Perkins intimated that it was not in good taste for Wolfe to write about Scribner people in his new novel, a growing repressed resentment against him flared into the open. In vain did Perkins try to reason with him and assure him of his devotion.

Wolfe's choler erupted anew when a former landlord sued him for libel and the Scribner firm advised a settlement. A second suit by his former agent angered him still more. In a letter he never mailed, Wolfe told Perkins: "The editorial relation between us . . . has now lost its initial substance. It has become a myth—and what is worse than that, an untrue myth. . . . I impeach your virtues and your conduct." Years later Perkins wrote to Marjorie Rawlings, "He was so tormented that he could do nothing but drink and brood."

Wolfe could no longer be pacified or conciliated. In a letter extending to around nine thousand words he formally broke with Perkins.

Like Joyce, I am going to write as I please, and this time, no one is going to cut unless I want them to. . . . My life has been ravaged, my energy exhausted, my work confused and aborted long enough by this kind of miserable, time-serving procrastination. I'm not going to endure it any longer. I'm not going to pour my sweat and blood and energy and life and talent into another book now, only to be told two or three years from now that it would be undesirable to publish it without certain formidable deletions.

Several publishers approached him, and he communicated with some himself. More than one, however, feared the trouble he

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would give them and shied away; others made him offers. He favored Harper and Brothers because he found Edward Aswell most sympathetic. Yet in a moment of calm he wrote to Charles Scribner: "Just let me tell you that I think you are not only the finest publishers, but among the finest people I have ever known. Whatever comes of all this, I know we will be friends." Perkins, on his part, expressed his reaction to the rupture in a letter to Fitzgerald in March 1938: "Tom was a kind of great adventure, but all the dreadful imperfections about him took much of the satisfaction out of it."

That summer, while on a trip to the Pacific Coast, Wolfe was told that Scribner salesmen were spreading derogatory stories about him. Suspecting that this gossip was inspired by Perkins, he wrote to his agent: "Max still tells people he is my friend, and then he runs me down." Living hard and neglecting a cough that developed into pneumonia, he became critically ill and had to be hospitalized. A cerebral infection set in and life was ebbing away from his huge frame. In a few moments of lucidity, aware of his condition and anxious to make amends, he disobeyed the doctor by penciling with great effort a note to Perkins—the last he was to write.

I'm sneaking this against orders—but "I've got a hunch"—and I want to write these words to you.

I've made a long voyage and been to a strange country, and I've seen the dark man very close; and I don't think I was too much afraid of him, but so much of mortality still clings to me—I wanted most desperately to live and still do. . . .

Whatever happens—I had this "hunch" and wanted to write you and tell you, no matter what happens or has happened, I shall always think of you and feel about you the way it was that 4th of July day 3 yrs. ago when you met me at the boat, and we went out to the cafe on the river and had a drink and later went on top of the tall building and all the strangeness and the glory and the power of life and of the city below—Yours always, Tom.

In 1919 Perkins suggested plots for stories to Arthur Train and advised him about the kind of books to write. In 1923 he was so impressed with Tom Boyd's *Through the Wheat* that he persuaded Scribner to accept it despite the current disinterest in war books. Its publication in fact created a fresh demand for such books. His relations with James Boyd, Ring Lardner, Will James, John Thomason, Jr., Hamilton Basso, Marcia Davenport and Taylor Caldwell—to mention a few of his authors—were cordial and highly fruitful. When an older Scribner editor was about to reject Lardner's book because he was "merely a sportswriter and just one more of Perkins' roughneck authors," Perkins fought until he had his way. Another instance of his keen editorial judgment occurred in connection with Willard Huntington Wright. During convalescence from a nervous breakdown, Wright was forbidden to read serious books. Skimming through detective stories gave him the idea of writing some himself in order to pay his large medical bill. Liveright, his publisher, refused to give him the requested advance of three thousand dollars on the basis of plots he had outlined. Perkins, however, was quick to see their popular appeal and gave Wright the money. Published under the pseudonym of S. S. Van Dine, *The Benson Murder Case, The Canary Murder Case* and *The Green Murder Case,* each sold over sixty thousand copies in the original editions.

In his thirty-odd years as editor of Scribner, Perkins took infinite pains to make clear the weaknesses and shortcomings of manuscripts—even as he praised unstintedly their various virtues. Marjorie Rawlings, who greatly benefited from his guidance, said: "His special gift was his ability, as creative as that of the author himself, to enter into the mind of the individual writer, to understand what that writer was attempting to do and to say, to direct all criticism and help toward that writer's own best expression, whether Max himself agreed or not."

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The Revolving Bookstand . . . . . .

Books About Books

EARL ROVIT

It is neither fashionable nor manly of me to admit it, but the fact of the matter is that I am silly about books about books. I am silly about "regular" books as well—about fiction, poetry, biography and the like—but there is a special thrum in my brain, an intransigent node of neural impulses and exaltations, which is set into action only under the influence of a book about books. Literary Criticism/Scholarship/History, Intellectual and Cultural History, Bibliography—such crusty-dusty pedagogisms for studies that can, at their best, profer an unalloyed delight. Keats looking into Chapman's Homer could have owned no more shockingly spacious a view than was mine when first glimpsing the oceanic vistas charted by such men as Auerbach, Curtius, Frye, Huizinga, Matthiessen, Parrington. Scholars, critics, philologues—the very uncertainty of their correct title is an indication of their dangerous volatility—they are indisputably masters of the grand imaginative act. From behind their footnotes, their ink-smudged masks of scholarly sobriety, they fuse an entire world of their own making—a round whole world—satisfying as only great circles can be satisfying. Each pretends to offer a Virgilian tour of a rich universe and we follow our guides like trusting children as though the terrain we trod has real nitrogenous soil and substance. Only at the very end of the journey do we learn with a thrill of revelation that our guide is a mock-Virgil, a dramatic impostor in a picaresque novel that he alone wrote. Our Virgils are masked Dantes, exploring the convolutions of their own constructions, and if we are disappointed at this exposure of identities, we lack that special nerve in the heart that makes some readers devotees of books about books.

For this, it seems to me, is the basic illusion and premise of the philological art. It is at its base every bit as fanciful as the purer works of imagination which it abstracts for its conceptual designs. If poetry is in some degree "gorgeous nonsense," then philology is the slightly less resplendent pseudo sense that can be created out of that nonsense. Certainly its accomplishments are of the same order as those of the works it claims to study: a rigorous logic inherent in its own design ("form") and a creation of meanings through the successive emphasis and subordination of its materials ("content"). While it lacks that intensity of illusion through which great poetry seems to inform the soul of man, it partially redresses the balance by its necessary obeisance to the brute forces of history and the iron realities of mankind's collective experience. An epic study like Henry Nash Smith's *Virgin Land* may not enhance the soul in the same way that Cooper's *Leatherstocking Tales* do; but it may succeed in creating within the intellect a series of symbolic coordinates that enlarges one's sense of understanding. The one is, to be sure, no more "true" than the other, but

✪ EARL ROVIT, author of *The Player King*, is a Guggenheim Fellow this year and is living in Paris.

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what the literary-historical study loses in emotional and personalizing effect, it gains in social usability.

We have not usually attended to this view of philology in American scholarship. In part because of our concern for immediate "cash-register values," we have been prone to regard the philological act both too narrowly and too earnestly. We have placed demands on the scholar/critic that he can satisfy only at the expense of what is ultimately of greatest value in his work. We have required him to be an Information-Pleaser, an excavator of facts and data, a poorly paid F.B.I. agent exposing the flagrant discrepancies between evidence and testimony. Certainly these are some of the functions within his just provinces, but he ought not—one hopes—to be merely an extrapolator of encyclopedias. Similarly, an undeniable function of the critic is to provide a sophisticated focus in which the books of a certain author or age or genre may be read with the greatest amount of judicious sympathy. But this too cannot be the end of criticism for either the critic or the reader—this act of guidance which is too often just a subtle and elevated response to our national how-to-do-it fixation of energies. To regard scholarship in so dull and slanted a light is to look too narrowly on what may possibly be a much broader swath of life than we had realized. This pervasive, almost affectionate, denigration of scholarship can be seen in the American tendency to consign the scholar/critic to some beadledom of dusty endeavor, a kind of solemnity of the library stacks where even the owl cannot breathe. Tradition has not erred in bestowing the metaphors of light and flight on any kind of revelatory experience, and to force the philologue into a haunched posture in the cramped dusk of the study is to clip the wings and extinguish all the possibilities of illumination.

These gratuitous remarks are evoked by what seems to me to be the present condition of American scholarship. Never has there been so much of it. Never has it been so available, so handsomely and expensively decked out in formidable bindings, beautifully designed, elegantly researched, ponderously awaiting the rewards of becoming itemized in the cumulative bibliographies, caustically reviewed in the learned journals, densely settled on the library shelves and perhaps even reprinted in paper editions for the mystification of undergraduates and other voyeurs of our culture. In preparation for this piece I have read in and around some twenty recent works of scholarship/criticism that bear directly or indirectly on American literature. All but two of the works were written by American scholars and all but two were published under the genial subsidization of an American university press. The question I posed for myself as I read was what are American scholars doing in the field of American scholarship. How are they realizing in 1966 the impossible injunction laid upon them some century and a quarter earlier in Emerson's famous Phi Beta Kappa address? And, let me hasten to say, if the results are not entirely pleasing —as they decidedly are not—neither are they unqualifiedly dispiriting.

But before I proceed in my Rhadamanthine spirit, let me insert a cautionary note. I lay no claims to an exhaustive expertise in any area of American literature that I am bumptious enough to evaluate. I must quite candidly admit that it is not as an expert on Wallace Stevens that I find J. Hillis Miller's or Joseph N. Riddel's explorations less satisfying than Denis Donoghue's, but as an excited reader of Stevens' poetry and an avid glutton of literary criticism. The distinction is, I think, an important one to insist upon. As a devotee of books about books I take the vainglorious attitude that any book not expressly labeled a specialized monograph or treatise ought to be susceptible to my patient ardor. I am perfectly willing to leave the abstruse work of scholarly research to the few dedicated co-workers in the field who can properly evaluate its labors and modest successes. The book publishers, however, do not allow me to do this. University presses, in particular, are guilty of a sort of unwitting charlatanism in the distribution of their wares. A mono-

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graph, an expanded treatise, a controlled study designed to lead to a certain irreducible atom of platitudinous discovery ought not to be marketed as a book at all. To do so is to confound the distinction between the specialized monograph and the book of scholarship that is meant to appeal to a larger circle of readers. As a devotee of books about books, I should not have been misled into reading either Robert W. Lewis, Jr.'s *Hemingway on Love* (University of Texas Press) or the collection of lectures edited by Roger Asselineau, *The Literary Reputation of Hemingway in Europe* (New York University Press). Neither book appeals to a human interest that could possibly concern any save the dedicated Hemingway specialist. (Since I happen also to be a dedicated Hemingway specialist, I might as well suggest that the Lewis book is embarrassingly inept and vulgar and the Asselineau collection is a scrupulous investigation of the limited material indicated by its title.) But perhaps this helps to make my distinction more comprehensible. I am silly about books about books, not because of some quirk of bibliomania in my psyche, but because I regard books as one of the major articulations of mankind's expressions of its humanity. A book about a book, as in Philip Young's now classic study of Hemingway, can transcend the specialization of its subject and address itself ultimately to our collective frailties and strengths as human beings.

With this qualification out of the way, let me attempt an approximate statement on how I have arrived at my judgments. And here, admitting my incapacity to judge in purely scholarly terms, I would invoke an old familiar word as a touchstone, the word, "grace." When a philological study is written with grace, when it incarnates grace in the rhythms of its development, I feel that my patience and my passion have been amply rewarded. Nor am I specifically referring to a graceful style, although one welcomes that rare beast whenever one finds it. While Howard Mumford Jones (*The Theory of American Literature,* Revised Edition, Cornell University Press) is master of an admirable admixture of grace in both style and thought, his late colleague, Perry Miller (*The Life of the Mind in America,* Harcourt, Brace and World) possesses at best a harsh, hardworking prose style that can barely contain the pressure of his materials. Yet Miller's *thought,* the impeccable integrity with which his mind ranges over the quiddities of religious and legal controversy in the prosaic American nineteenth century, produces a book that is saturated with grace. In general, the older scholars who came under my consideration, Perry Miller, Howard Mumford Jones, René Wellek (*A History of Modern Criticism, 1750-1950,* Yale University Press) are blessed with such grace. Their books move at an unhurried, uncluttered pace. The authors make no attempt to coerce the reader with an extravagance of speculation or rhetorical flourish. The tasks they set for themselves are large, but in some sense, measured. All three of these scholars offer "big" books—books that attempt to describe extremely complicated and quite massive blocks of literary history. They make no pretensions to exhaustive completeness; they exhibit an endearing humility before the insoluble ambiguities of their subject matter. But there is a real pride, an unassailable dignity and sure confidence in the measure that they take of themselves and the manner in which they apply that measure. They have assayed their problems and they have assayed their own capacities to deal with these problems. There is something almost magisterial in their proved ability to do what they have set out to do.

I linger over this aspect of the accomplishments of our older generation of scholars, because it seems to me to be at striking variance from the work done by the men younger in age, all of whom are in some sense their students. In this connection I would group three books: R. W. B. Lewis' *Trials of the Word* (Yale University Press), Sherman Paul's *Edmund Wilson* (University of Illinois Press), and J. Hillis Miller's *Poets of Reality* (Harvard University Press). Each of the three is

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in the prime of his critical maturity. Each has produced a substantial enough body of criticism to lend weight and authority to their further researches and explorations. Lewis' study of American innocence as a defining archetype in the national psyche (*The American Adam*), Paul's incisive penetration of Emerson's thought and Thoreau's achievement (*Emerson's Angle of Vision, The Shores of America*), and J. Hillis Miller's remarkable work tracing the effects of nihilism on the religious sensibilities of some great Victorian writers (*The Disappearance of God*) are undisputable additions to the corpus of contemporary literary criticism and history. Yet each of these new books is disappointing in a different way. Lewis' collection of essays is irremediably a potpourri of casual pieces, each bearing the stamp of the occasion that brought it into being. And while we can take it for granted that Lewis is an informed and perceptive reader, the essays fail to cohere and fail to advance significantly his views on "American literature and the humanistic tradition." Paul's study of Edmund Wilson, on the other hand, while beautifully coherent, strikes me as curiously inadequate. To read Wilson's latest collection, *The Bit Between My Teeth*, parallel to Paul's laboratory analyses of Wilson's intellectual peregrinations, is to become sharply aware of the academic light years that separate Paul's temperament and point of view from the man he is studying. His book seems to me, in the bad sense of the term, "academic"—detached, passionless and opaque. Indeed, it is difficult for me to understand why Professor Paul should have undertaken the labor of a task so seemingly unrewarding. J. Hillis Miller's study of Conrad, Yeats, Eliot, Thomas, Stevens and William Carlos Williams is more difficult for me to evaluate. He employs the same methodology that was so successful in *The Disappearance of God*—extensive quotation, exhaustive analysis, a pressing concern for the metaphysical subtleties of the subject-object relationship and the resultant contortions of style and form. But where the method proved illuminating on such writers as De Quincey, Browning and Hopkins, I found it began to drone with Eliot and Stevens. In particular, it forced an inflation of William Carlos Williams' achievement, since his work is seen as the evolutionary climax of a poetic development—a climax that Miller's own chosen quotations demonstrate to be patently absurd. It is possible that secondary considerations of various kinds have operated in the publishing of these three books, and that all these critics will reestablish themselves with the kind of work that their earlier contributions had promised. But except for the stunning impact of Frederick J. Hoffman's *The Mortal No* in 1964, this "prime" generation of American critics has been either silent (Roy Harvey Pearce, Charles Feidelson) or committed to reworking ground they have already cultivated.

If the older generation at its best attains a kind of magisterial grace, the younger generation at its worst exhibits a crabbed nervousness. Jerome Mazzaro's *The Poetic Themes of Robert Lowell* (University of Michigan Press) and Joseph N. Riddel's *The Clairvoyant Eye: The Poetry and Poetics of Wallace Stevens* (Louisiana State University Press) project a strange unfocused excitement, as though each sentence were intent on justifying the world and all that lies therein. Both Mazzaro and Riddel are studying highly competent poets, but neither critic makes much attempt to prove his credentials by writing readable prose. (I have a perhaps unwarranted suspicion of critics of poetry whose prose seems to have been fashioned by hammers and saws.) Both studies are essentially in the area of the specialized monograph, and while I would not disclaim the energy, patience and sheer brute work involved, I cannot help asking at some point, Why? While reading both books I returned to the original sources, to Lowell and to Stevens. Neither is an easy poet to read; both have sustained moments in their verse in which they are hardly accessible at all. But both are ever so much more accessible than their learned interpreters, that I had to wonder what could

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possibly justify such a wholesale expenditure of critical energy.

Two other books fall into a special class entirely: Edd Winfield and Aileen Wells Parks's edition, *The Collected Poems of Henry Timrod* (University of Georgia Press) and Floyd Stovall's *The Poems of Edgar Allan Poe* (University of Virginia Press). As far as I can estimate, the editing of both texts seems to be impeccable, but I shall leave that judgment to those scholars who are qualified to make it. Both volumes are handsome enough specimens of the book maker's art (the format of the *Timrod* is perhaps duller than it need be and the *Poe* publishers have somewhat whimsically chosen to print the definitive poems in disconcerting italics), but the two books did raise a question in my mind. No student of American literature would do anything but applaud the publication of definitive texts; but why must each press vaunt its own unique press-hood in the designing of a collected edition? Is it too great a request of American individualistic enterprise that we come to some general agreement on what a collected edition should be like? Without doing more than mentioning the prestigious French *Bibliothèque de la Pléiade,* we may yet ask why our university presses cannot agree on a format, a binding, an assortment of type faces, and a methodology of layout that would enable our poets to stand side-by-side on a library shelf in the happy democracy of similarity, while they exhibit their very different excellences in their language rather than their buckram dress. The *Poe* volume is tall, lean and elegant, the *Timrod* rather short and stubby in comparison, but neither book design seems to me to capture the characteristic spirit of its author. A uniformity of design, I should think, would be a blessing to librarians and scholars, and a curse to no one save to those with an excessive *amour propre* that drips over into matters where it has no business.

I have saved two books for the end of my considerations, because I think they indicate two fertile directions that are open to American scholarship. In the 1965 revision of *The Theory of American Literature,* Howard Mumford Jones describes the multiplicity of work in American studies between 1948 and 1965. He shrewdly analyzes the effects of the New Criticism and the newer "mythopoetic" Messianism on our literary-historical studies, judging (correctly, I believe) that whatever else may be gained in these shifts, there has been a concentrated withdrawal from the more basic task of literary history. "Modernists are not concerned about the American qualities of American literature," he concludes. "They are concerned about the plight of Western man." And while he views this retreat with a degree of sympathy, he is convinced that it is a retreat and perhaps even a surrender of the American intellectual spirit. My own judgments are on Jones's side. When American scholars reject the task of national definition either by ignoring it completely (J. Hillis Miller, Joseph Riddel) or by equating the American condition with the Western condition (R. W. B. Lewis), then, regardless of what insights and perceptions they may claim, they have divorced literature from history and taken residence in a beclouded cuckoo-land of pestiferous irrelevance and solipsistic smog. That this is not the only option open to them is demonstrated by Carl Bode's *The Half-World of American Culture* (Southern Illinois University Press) and Denis Donoghue's *Connoisseurs of Chaos* (Macmillan). Both books depart from the current stream of withdrawal and it may be significant to note that the author of the first spent three years in London as cultural attaché, and the author of the second is a native Englishman.

Professor Bode's book is ingenuously subtitled "A Miscellany," and in one sense it certainly is miscellaneous. The individual essays are complete in themselves, were written for different occasions, and scatter their focuses over such disparate subjects as a remote religious eccentric of the early nineteenth century, a discussion of the effect of the lyceum on the "sound" of American literature, Lloyd Douglas, the "Beat" poets, and racism in an early

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twentieth-century best-selling novelist; there are also several essays on Bode's particular specialty, Henry David Thoreau. And yet the book is a good deal more than a "Miscellany," because it is informed throughout by a pervasive attention to the peculiar nature and style of *American* literature and *American* life. Urbanely written, wearing its formidable erudition with an almost journalistic nonchalance, Bode's book narrows its concerns to the interaction of a particular society (sometimes a family group) on a particular sensibility or style or thematic interest. The results seem to me to be of far greater worth than most of the more "formal" but rootless literary studies that I have been discussing.

Donoghue's book takes a very different tack from Bode's, but the results are, I think, equally salutary. Subtitled "Ideas of Order in Modern American Poetry," *Connoisseurs of Chaos* is a kind of aesthetic codicil to Roy Harvey Pearce's *The Continuity of American Poetry*. It covers something of the same ground that was perhaps over-gaudily charted by Glauco Cambon in *The Inclusive Flame*—a series of analyses of American poetry from Whitman to Roethke with a flexible frame of reference that has to do with the problem of Order in a culture where Self, Society, Nature and God are at best protean entities. A measure of Donoghue's success are his discussions of Frederick Goddard Tuckerman and Edwin Arlington Robinson. The first has been almost totally neglected by critics (Yvor Winters and Edmund Wilson are exceptions) and the second is usually a superfluous embarrassment. Donoghue is able to present them not only as poets whose voices are unique and valuable, but also as poets whose unresolved dilemmas and occasional successes bestow light on the problems of being an American. Bode's achievement in rendering a sense of the "density" of the American experience and Donoghue's ability to abstract from that experience without denying its defining potency are, I feel, examples of two directions that American scholarship can follow without abrogating its basic national and historical responsibilities.

I wish I could see clearly enough into the future to predicate a stronger conclusion to this discussion. I am not persuaded that there is an evolution of "grace" in a scholar's manner: that he will move through a period of nervous stridency to a more leisurely and wise maturity. Although the "publish or perish" pressures that bludgeoned American scholarship as recently as ten years ago seem to have largely abated as departments of English have expanded, the haste with which articles and books are produced seems, if anything, to have become accelerated. The establishment of an official institution by the United States Government with a mandate to concern itself with the humanities is a fact that I welcome excitedly in principle even as I am terrified by the possibilities of the power it may exert. Should it lend its awesome weight to the formula of inhuman, irrelevant scholarship and criticism that is the staple of the graduate dissertation, then the causes of literary history and philology will both suffer. An earnest mediocrity, a soulless ingathering of meaningless factualities, a factory assemblage of *explications de texte*—these are some of the tendencies that would increase and multiply. And equally dismaying would be the reactions against the mold of academic bureaucracy. Asserting their obligations to the human, the nervous voices would mount to crescendo, mouthing the frothy slogans of Apocalypse and freedom from responsibility. But surely—I voice a hope, not a prediction—the American scholar/critic can be human and responsible at the same time. But if he would become so, he must subscribe himself to the strictures of history and the inexorable logics of imaginative form. Both Bode and Donoghue demonstrate that this can be done when the critic cares properly enough.

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Reviewed by HENRY F. MAY

The late Perry Miller, according to his intimates, sometimes referred to his long-awaited, long-delayed work on American thought in the nineteenth century as "Miller's Parrington." The most obvious meaning of this phrase was simply that the projected work, like Vernon Parrington's *Main Currents of American Thought,* was to be a vast piece of literary architecture. Indeed, Miller's work, if completed, would have dwarfed Parrington's. Where Parrington had concentrated on literature and politics, Miller planned to deal with a whole range of topics such as science, religion, law, education and philosophy. A generation of intensive scholarship since Parrington had immeasurably extended the material confronting a historian. In the 1960's, moreover, Parrington's clear dichotomies between East and West, Conservative and Liberal, were unusable for any serious historian, let alone for so complex and subtle a critic of American culture as Perry Miller. One cannot help wondering whether the phrase may not have implied that Miller, like Parrington, would fail to complete his magnum opus. The insight, the flamboyance and the bitterness of such a meaning would be entirely characteristic of the man.

As it turned out, while Parrington died halfway through his third and last volume, Miller left behind only two completed books out of nine, with a fragment of one more. Often posthumous publication of uncompleted fragments is a mistake; in this case it was not. In some ways *The Life of the Mind in America,* although it is by no means Miller's masterpiece, is the most fitting monument this powerful and fascinating historian could have.

Miller, who was a prolific and thus necessarily an efficient writer, bogged down in this book well before his death. Whatever the personal reasons for this fact, there are sufficient explanations in the nature of the task he had set himself. His greatest book, massive in scholarship and ample in scale, dealt only with New England, and almost entirely with Massachusetts, from the mid-seventeenth century to about 1730. His last project proposed to deal with the whole amorphous, expanding republic from the Revolution to the Civil War.

The subject is not only a big one, but it is also one peculiarly formidable for the intellectual historian. No clear, articulated system of thought stood at the center of the national enterprise, as Puritan theology had stood at the beginning of New England. Theology itself was still a lively and controversial discipline in the seminaries, but most Americans ignored it. The combination of Scottish philosophy, English political economy and attenuated Calvinism taught in most colleges inspired few of the period's major achievements. Politics was the most obvious axis, but did not really subsume the entire Life of the Mind, and Miller's interest in political history had always been secondary and indirect. The lack of a central theme probably dictated Miller's decision to subordinate chronology, and organize his work into nine vast topical surveys, each covering the entire period. This decision, like most decisions of historians to avoid movement through time, was probably a mistake.

The flow of time, in Miller's best books, had been channeled into stories of decline. Yet to treat this period of the expansion of the Republic and the emergence of a distinctive democratic culture solely in terms of decline would have been grotesque. In some terms, as Miller shows us, decline indeed took place. James Kent and Joseph Story, the great codifiers of American law, are as close as anybody to being heroes of the completed sections of the book. To postfederalist gentlemen like them, their period was one in which cosmopolitan culture and intellectual discipline were increasingly threatened by ignorance and

✪ HENRY F. MAY, professor of history at the University of California, Berkeley, writes: "While I took courses with Mr. Miller as a graduate student and talked to him not long before his death, I did not know him intimately and the opinions expressed are drawn primarily from his works."

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demagogy. In terms of political thought, the period from Jefferson and Adams to Jackson and Webster may be seen as decline, and in terms of political institutions the story goes from the success of 1787 to the breakdown of 1861. Both the completed sections of the book, that on religion and that on law, are in part stories of vulgarization. Yet the 1850's are the period of the greatest triumphs of American literature, and the emergence from nowhere of Lincoln makes it hard to speak of exhaustion even in politics.

If, moreover, Miller had centered his whole story on decline, it would have had to be decline from the Enlightenment. Miller never felt easy with the Enlightenment, and much of his best work is a polemic against its assumptions. His long list of books skips it, jumping again and again from the Puritans to the Romantics and Transcendentalists. In this book, as in some of his others, its ideas are treated only in passing, and this is one of the book's major weaknesses. Nobody yet has studied the American Enlightenment, transcending politics, in wide scope and analytic depth. One would think that Miller might have enjoyed a harder look at its glorious paradoxes, its planets spinning endlessly in accord with the dictates of moral law. Perhaps because of the sheer uncongeniality of the only possible starting place, Miller provided no firm pad from which to launch his story.

If decline could not furnish the main movement of the book, neither could advance. Toward all the possible themes of triumph, Miller was deeply and even agonizingly ambivalent. It is this fact that gives the book its originality and interest, and it is very likely the same fact that made it impossible to complete. Since Turner, indeed since Bancroft, most historians have treated the early nineteenth century as a time of expansion—of the frontier, of industry, of the national ego. In a recent review in the *New York Review of Books,* Alfred Kazin, usually a most perceptive critic, seems to say that Miller identified himself completely—despite some foreboding asides—with American power and might. This I think mistaken, in emphasis if not in its basic assertion. Miller did indeed sound at times the Hemingwayish note of a he-man historian among the literary sissies—his most damaging foible. He talked a good deal, and with relish, about his wartime experience, and referred to his early exposure to the jolly brutalities of the I.W.W. In a flamboyant late preface mentioned by Kazin, he compared his own realization of American force, while helping load oil drums on a river steamer on the Congo, to the creative vision granted Gibbon while sitting in the ruins of the Capitol at Rome. It is worth noting, however, that the historian with whom Miller chooses to compare himself did not write about the triumph of the Roman Republic.

Miller's imagination was indeed grasped, as what historian's is not, by the awesome fact of American power. But his attitude toward this power, and toward the triumphs of the machine in general, was no more one of cheerful acceptance than that of Henry Adams. In an essay published in THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR in 1961 Miller discussed "The Responsibility of Mind in a Civilization of Machines." Always unsympathetic to easy rejections of reality, Miller pokes some rather heavy fun at young executives who take up collecting Thoreau, and rush home in their automobiles to mix a little Walden with their Martinis. Yet mechanization is presented seriously as monstrous, and abdication of responsibility before it as a species of infantile regression. The mind, Miller tells us, has given up responsibility even for destruction, which has become as automatic as anything else. Neither acceptance nor mere despair is the essay's message. It is a jeremiad, and jeremiads are preached only to the people of the Covenant, who have the duty of repentance whether or not they are able to be saved. The essay ends with a call for reassertion of the individual intellect at all costs.

In his earlier books, all Miller's heroes or even part-heroes are lonely resisters. The only person of whom he has written at length in tones of unqualified admiration is Jonathan Edwards, and Miller dwells on Edwards' rejection by the cheery Philistines

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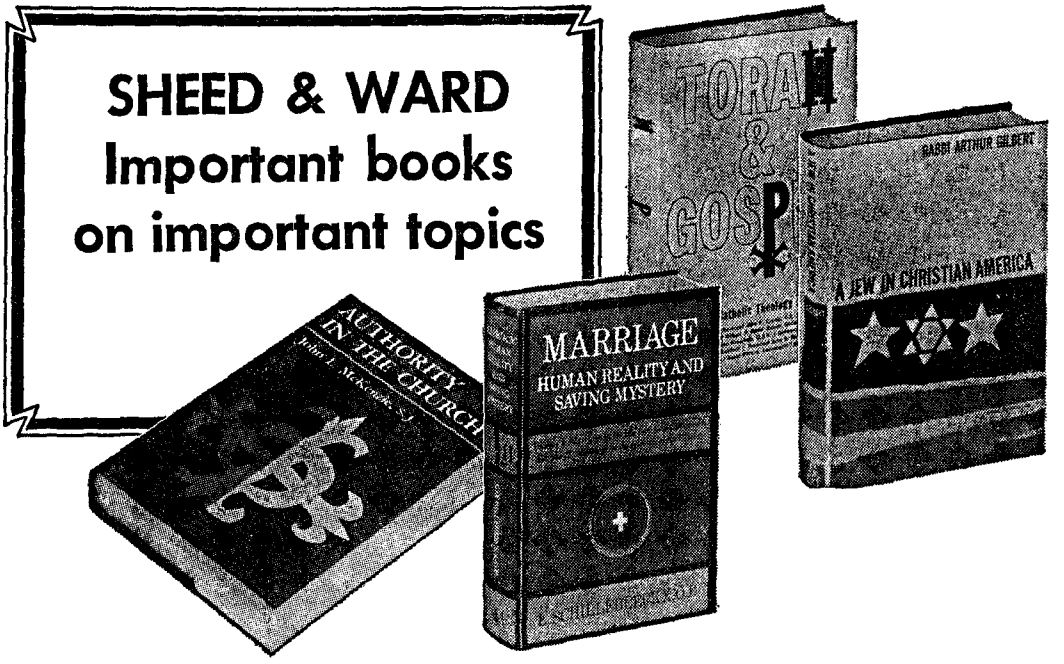

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of his expansive day. Edwards confronted the most profound human problems; Thoreau eluded some of them. Thus, Miller shows us, the undeniable literary achievements of the Concord ascetic are marred by his inhuman and sometimes self-protective withdrawal from experience.

In the present book, Miller did not reach the sections in which he would have had to deal with the literary figures he most admired. But he makes clear why he could not use these as the central figures of the story; he knew both them and their milieu too well:

> Because most of our classic literature of these years is hostile toward, or at least resistant to, the machine, we forget against what a background of loud hosannas Thoreau and Melville wrote.

Toward expanding power and toward individual secession Miller is ambivalent, and so is he toward democracy itself. So are many American historians, but their courage or clarity fails them when it comes to admitting it. Nearly all, in their own time, have their hearts firmly on the side of the people, and a great many have given time and money and energy toward the effort to make democracy work. Yet somehow, so far, until some future breakthrough, they find it hard to love the immediate consequences of egalitarian culture, and even sometimes to accept the outcome of egalitarian politics. The easiest way to handle this problem is to shut either one eye or both, and this was to Miller impossible. He had to look straight at the triumph of the many over the few in both its destructive and its creative aspects. None of our historians treating the age of Jackson has managed to do this; it was accomplished only by the greatest of the period's own imaginative artists.

A Menckenian dismissal of democracy was as impossible for Miller as a Whitmanesque paean. The triumph of the people over the Federalist or Virginia elite cannot be presented as an unqualified blessing by a historian who deals, for instance, with religion, education or foreign policy. Yet the democratic undertaking was far too big to laugh at; Jacksonian America believed not only that all of us, freely united, could earn our livings and govern our states, but that we could develop our own minds and save our own souls.

In America, unlike Europe, romanticism and democracy go together more often than not, and Miller's ambivalence took in both. The bland intellectualism of the Enlightenment repelled him as much as the easy gush of the feebler Transcendentalists. After Edwards, in a nineteenth-century and democratic context, nobody was able to make an intellectual system out of the mystery and terror of the Universe. In the widening gap between mind and emotion, one choice led to superficial dryness, the other—pursued with sufficient ardor—to Captain Ahab's solipsistic nightmare.

Ambivalence and ambiguity are of course the familiar stock-in-trade of modern criticism, but with Miller they go almost too deep to be usable. I suspect his ideological divisions were fundamentally a private matter, but they were also affected by the intellectual history of his own period, and demonstrated in his successive attitudes toward intellectual fashions. Miller started his scholarly career, he tells us, in the heyday of the Menckenian onslaught against standard American culture. For his subject he chose Puritanism, Mencken's favorite and easiest target. This involved him in a vindication of the past, but in a far deeper attack than Mencken's against the reigning progressive optimism. In the thirties, Miller, like other literary intellectuals, was forced to choose a political position in relation to the shifting combinations of Popular Front intellectual politics. He did not remain aloof but yet refused—sometimes awkwardly and at the cost of important friendships—to accept the dominant simplifications. After 1945, the prestige among intellectuals of neoorthodoxy seemed suddenly to make Miller's kind of history up-to-date. Miller had long been in touch with this current, and in a phrase he attributed to Morton White, he became at least an associate member of "Atheists for Niebuhr." His work had long been full of the irony to which Niebuhr gave theological defini-

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tion. It was, as Niebuhr has stated, the virtues of America that—embedded in egotism—nourished and magnified her historic faults. Yet here too Miller avoided, unlike some of the followers of fashion, the easy way out. In a respectful review of a Niebuhr book he points out the dangers of ironic self-indulgence:

> . . . the contention fully established, a gnawing question arises: by what further and extraordinary convulsions of the human spirit shall paradox itself be saved from becoming merely a conventional way of explaining—and thus to some degree of rationalizing and justifying—the unrighteousness of the righteous.

Miller's pervasive irony was perhaps confirmed, but it was certainly not begun by his exposure to Niebuhr. His works on Puritanism all illustrate the slogan that nothing fails like success. In the present volume, perhaps because of its closer-to-home subject or perhaps because of exhaustion, the irony is always present, often illuminating, sometimes devastating, and occasionally forced or insistent.

The first section of *The Life of the Mind,* a magisterial survey of the period's religious history, draws on much first-rate recent scholarship (although often unduly harsh to other historians, Miller cordially welcomed help). The repeated and increasingly mechanical revivalism of the period offers an easy subject for Menckenian caricature. It was in the Jacksonian period that American religion, like American politics, took on its awesome and preposterous shape. But Miller handles the ironies of revivalism with respect and restraint; they are too big to be funny. Concentration on God led straight back to concentration on the community; voluntarism and sectarian fission carried to an extreme led to moral conformity; the spontaneous religion of the heart led to the development of the most cynical devices to coerce the emotions into acceptance of the message. Still more strikingly, an Errand into the Wilderness which had started with the departure of a saving remnant from the European Egypt led in this period toward the most grandiose possible return. The purification of America was seen to be merely a modest preliminary for the permanent, rapid, systematic evangelization of the world. Where this moral Manifest Destiny was to lead in the long run is suggested by Miller in terms whose connotations extend beyond religious history and into the worst of our present ironies:

> One may easily ridicule this nineteenth-century rhetoric. Yet when one considers the twentieth-century role assumed by the United States, he is bound to admit this same rhetoric contains the germ of that national disposition toward "heathen" communities which would have been incomprehensible to a Jefferson or a Washington.

The second part of the book, on law, is the most finished and subtle section, and testifies to Miller's enduring energy for research in fields that were new to him. Here the lawyers, the new upper class of the young Republic, are seen fighting their heroic battles for the liberal (which means the eighteenth-century gentleman's) mind against irrationality and demagogy, against the religious geysers and the political torrent of the Jacksonian period. Clearly, the lawyers speak for the Enlightenment, and yet their main concern is a defense of the antique Gothic mystery of the common law against rude rationalization. Like starchy Presbyterians resisting revivalism, they quickly lose their grip. Originally defenders of the cosmopolitan, neutral, rational scholarship of the law, they are reduced to arguing that law embodies the truths of Americanism, morality and even, specifically, Christianity. Approaching the institutional breakdown of 1861, they are so fearful of abolitionist excesses that they defend antiabolitionist mobs and lose all ability to save the Union to which they are devoted.

Perhaps the deepest, and certainly the most overt irony is contained in the unfinished section on science. (Since it is partly in outline, we can look at naked thematic statements which would have been embodied in metaphor and example in the finished work.) From the contemplation of the majesty of the physical universe preached by the gentlemen-philosophers of the En-

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lightenment, American science shifted its emphasis to crass practicality. Moreover, its spokesmen insisted that America's inventive genius, together with her free institutions and lack of moral corruption, would enable her quickly to outstrip the Old World:

> Could not this technological majesty join with the starry heavens above and the moral law within to form a peculiarly American trinity of the Sublime?

It could not; instead, the hopes of American science were blighted by the very nationalism and utilitarianism that was so loudly hailed. By the end of the period, according to a statement in the outline, the scientists were forced to realize:

> that there does exist in the country a deep, angry, sullen hatred of the concept of intellect maintained by the advocates of pure, unproductive science. The democracy and the religious community both sense that it is their enemy.

Among American historians, only Henry Adams used irony as successfully as Miller at his best. Like Miller, he controlled it better in his earlier work. In Adams' *History*, Jefferson's failures are generously allowed to illuminate Jefferson's greatness. In the *Education* and still more in the *Letter to American Teachers of History* the universal ironies illuminate Adams more than the universe. In Charles Beard and his followers, irony is present but often involuntary. One can never tell, and one suspects Beard did not know, what attitude he really took toward the mighty, ugly success story of industrial capitalism that dominates the *Rise of American Civilization*. There are a few glimpses in Turner of the ironies of the expanding frontier, and these are illuminated by Henry Nash Smith. For historians of the South and slavery, especially Vann Woodward (another fellow traveler with Niebuhr), irony is inescapable. But in most of the leading historians of the generation a decade younger than Miller, we see very little of it. Daniel Boorstin insists, in part convincingly, that America owes her successes to her avoidance of theory and her talent for improvisation. But he leaves out too much of the price of improvisation to convince readers who live in jerry-built cities and worry about hand-to-mouth foreign policy. Richard Hofstadter, who is the most influential and perhaps the most brilliant of his generation of historians, falls short of irony for opposite reasons. His account of anti-intellectualism in American religion and education slights the generous egalitarianism that in both fields sometimes produced grotesque results.

Sometimes in this last book Miller's ironic paradoxes are forced and his writing too high-pitched; the ironies are not always under control. Yet the book is full of suggestions for historians, and full of the kind of insights that come only from deep knowledge and long thought. Furthermore, and partly because of its incompleteness, it helps us to approach the most interesting and complex of recent American historians. In this way, among others, it illuminates the life of the mind in America. In his 1961 essay on "The Responsibility of Mind" Miller himself asked the most relevant question: "Is success the only goal?"

Capote's Nonfiction Novel

IN COLD BLOOD: A True Account of a Multiple Murder and Its Consequences. *By Truman Capote. Random House. $5.95.*

Reviewed by ROBERT LANGBAUM

No one at this late date has to be told that this spectacularly best-selling account of the murder of the Clutter family in Holcomb, Kansas, on November 14, 1959, makes good reading, that it is not only the sort of thriller you "can't put down" but the sort that the most sophisticated people can thrill to. The question I want to take up arises from Mr. Capote's claim, made in an inconspicuous note at the end, that this, his "ninth published book, represents the culmination of his long-standing desire to

ROBERT LANGBAUM dealt with autobiography as art in writing about *Out of Africa* in his latest book, *The Gayety of Vision: A Study of Isak Dinesen's Art*. He is professor of English at the University of Virginia.

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make a contribution toward the establishment of a serious new literary form: the Nonfiction Novel." The claim was elaborated in the long interview that appeared in the *New York Times Book Review* of January 16, behind the front-page review of *In Cold Blood.* Mr. Capote described in the interview his five years of research, from the time the murder was committed to the day, April 14, 1965, when the criminals, Richard Hickock and Perry Smith, were finally hanged.

Most reviewers extolled the book, but pooh-poohed the idea of a nonfiction novel as too patently absurd to be worth discussing. I would like to give the claim serious consideration, because the tie between journalism and the novel is an old and perplexing one, going back to Defoe. As Ortega y Gasset has observed, the novel is the only literary form that does not want to look like a literary form—that wants to look like a bundle of letters, a journal, an autobiography, like life itself. We know how many novels are really autobiographies or accounts of true crimes—but disguised, with perhaps some loss from the disguise. Why not, therefore, substantiate the novel's claim to truthfulness by being truthful?

Besides, Mr. Capote has pinpointed with his phrase, "nonfiction novel," a series of questions that have been going the rounds in literary discussions since World War II. With the decline of the novel since the war, critical and discursive writing has so often seemed bolder and more imaginative then fiction as to make us feel that the line between so-called creative and noncreative writing is not so easily discernible as we used to think. The New Critics have also taught us since the war to give more weight to the actual structure of a work than to the circumstances that brought it into being. Once we look at structure, we find many nonfiction works as artful and sometimes more artful than many novels. Northrop Frye has, in his influential *Anatomy of Criticism,* gone so far as to apply the word *fiction* to any "work of art in prose."

Mr. Capote wanted primarily, I believe, to call attention to the artfulness of his book. For many people think, when they

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hear a book is "true," that the facts wrote it and that anyone given the same facts would come up with the same book. He wanted also to tell us that the book is no digression from his career as a fiction writer, but a "culmination"—that all his experience writing stories went into it. By taking him at his word and comparing his book to a novel, we can both appreciate his achievement and see its limits. For its best effects are novelistic and it falls short just where it is not novelistic enough.

Mr. Capote tells a mainly chronological narrative with himself as omniscient and invisible author. He might have enhanced the reportorial quality and given us a more intricate novelistic structure had he made us aware of his evidence, of how he came to know the facts. Instead the book itself, without the *Times* interview, requires the same confidence we give a novelist before we can get on with the story. Mr. Capote gains the advantages of any writer who uses a historical or allegedly historical subject—public significance, and an effect of fatefulness that comes of our knowing in advance how the story must come out. Mr. Capote achieves a hallucinated fatefulness through repeated references to the black Chevrolet that carries the murderers inexorably to their victims—although the murderers start hundreds of miles from their victims and with no apparent connection to them. There is the same hallucinated fatefulness in the return of the murderers from Mexico to Las Vegas, where they are arrested just after they have withdrawn from the post office the boots that match the footprints found in the Clutter house.

De Quincey long ago pointed out, in discussing *Macbeth,* that the writer turns crime stories into high literature by throwing "the interest on the murderer: our sympathy must be with *him,*" our "sympathy of comprehension," not "approbation." Mr. Capote manages to do this, with really reprehensible murderers; but he also writes a detective story, in which our interest is in seeing the criminals caught. In the same way, he writes a tragedy of fate; but he also writes a suspense story, by deliberately with-

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holding information—we do not learn until midway in the book how the criminals so much as know of the existence of their victims. It is because Mr. Capote has combined literary levels and captured all possible audiences that his book is selling so well.

When he tells us in the *Times* interview what a tiny amount of the information he gathered has actually gone into the book, we realize that the process of selection was a creative act. And assuming that his informants could remember the elaborate dialogue and intimate trains of thought given us, and that Mr. Capote, who used no tape recorder, remembered the interviews correctly, it is still the author who creates meaning through the placing of details and the repetitions. Mrs. Clutter, for example, the mother in the prosperous farm family who are to be murdered that night, shows a young girl her collection of miniature objects and comes to a little paper fan that "only cost a penny." "'Little things really belong to you,' she said, folding the fan. 'They don't have to be left behind. You can carry them in a shoebox.'" The author then tells us that Bonnie Clutter went away some years earlier for mental treatment, and the information operates as though it were part of the dialogue. That is why Bonnie's repetition, as she presses the fan into the hand of the departing girl, rounds out the scene so perfectly: "It's only a penny thing—but it's pretty."

One feels the author's hand there. And indeed, when the virginal genteel Mrs. Clutter, who has mental troubles and sleeps apart from her husband, displays a collection of miniature objects, we are reminded of Tennesee Williams' *Glass Menagerie* and feel we are being prepared for one of those stories the Southern writers do so well, in which brutal sexuality breaks in on sex-starved respectability to the secret satisfaction of both parties. Mr. Capote expends art to sound ominous notes of imminent disorder beneath the apparently placid surface of the Clutters' life. Mr. Clutter's militant teetotalism, his intolerance even of smoking and of tea and coffee, are described in such a way as to suggest emotional inadequacy; and life even hands

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Mr. Capote a coincidence no novelist would dare invent—Mr. Clutter takes out double-indemnity life insurance the day of the murder. These adumbrations make fascinating reading, but lead us up a false trail.

For the point Mr. Capote really wants to make is that the Clutters, far from reaching out for their destiny, were "of all people in the world . . . the least likely to be murdered." They were like you and me, the sort to whom the inconceivable does not happen. That is why Mr. Clutter, when he was awakened that night, spoke gently to the murderers, led them to the rest of his family and allowed them to tie him up and tape his mouth—because, conceiving only rational motivation, he assumed they were only after money. When Perry Smith cut his throat, he screamed out beneath the tape his supernatural surprise. His son, daughter and wife experienced nightmare come true as, after his murder, they waited bound and taped to be shot one by one. But until that point, the Clutters were not equipped to conceive of—*evil,* we are tempted to say; for the parallel with Dostoevski suggests itself when we deal with gratuitous crime. But Mr. Capote is, by implication at least, more nihilistic than Dostoevski. For what the Clutters could not conceive of was sheer screwiness.

The case is like that of Oswald, when we thought there must be an organization behind him because nothing so catastrophic as President Kennedy's assassination could have occurred for no reason at all. Because of the human need to rationalize experience, the citizens of Holcomb, Kansas, assumed the murderers must have come from their own limited circle, must have been connected to the victims. The chief detective, Dewey, when he finally got confessions from Smith and Hickock, felt disappointment; for "the confessions . . . failed to satisfy his sense of meaningful design. The crime was a psychological accident, virtually an impersonal act; the victims might as well have been killed by lightning."

That, at least potentially, is Mr. Capote's vision of American life—an apparently placid surface shot through by sporadic eruptions of violence. To show the Clutter

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case as not unique, he describes other multiple murders, all zany, all with an aura of sexuality about them. The sexual aura would seem to be *de rigueur* for murder stories nowadays; and it is not crimes of passion that interest us, but rather murder as a substitute for sexual expression, as stemming from sexual and emotional deficiency. Mr. Capote depicts his murderers, with exquisite precision, as deformed and stunted.

The half-breed Cherokee, Perry, a bedwetter with no settled character to his face, had legs too short for his torso: "when he stood up he was no taller than a twelve-year-old child." Dick, patched up after an auto accident, "had a face which seemed composed of mismatching parts." Although he boasted of being "a normal," Dick raped little girls. Perry was moralistically, fastidiously hostile to sex. It is a nice touch that Perry, the more attractive one, actually committed the murders; Dick, who planned them, hadn't the stomach for murder—he was a rapist and passer of bad checks, a punk. The relation between the pair is described as latently homosexual; Perry committed murders for Dick because he was under the spell of Dick's masculinity. But they did not understand the force that moved them. They themselves thought their aim in the Clutter house was burglary, although they went on with the carnage after they discovered there were only some forty dollars to be stolen. Perry did not know he was going to murder until Mr. Clutter's scream made him aware he was cutting the man's throat.

It is the nullity of all this that fascinates us, bringing our advanced ideas into play. Yet (to answer Kenneth Tynan's obtuse comments in the London *Observer*) these criminals are not insane in any simple technical sense, or there would have been no story worth telling. Mr. Capote, supported by the ambiguous psychiatric evidence, artistically blurs the distinction between sanity and insanity, as it is blurred in so many criminals of literature—in a motiveless malignity like that of Iago, or in Raskolnikov. As against the criminals of nineteenth-century literature, who had more positive

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qualities than the rest of us, more energy and moral complexity, the frantic gestures of Mr. Capote's criminals point only to the void at their center. Does this make them different from us, or have they hit the zero we all approach?

This is a question Mr. Capote has not resolved—the question of how seriously we are to take the shallow lives of his respectable people, the sort of life represented by the Clutter daughter, leader of the 4-H Club and champion baker of cherry pies. Mr. Capote no doubt wanted to admire these good people so much at the center of American life. But they did not really interest him, and they come out therefore rather like soap-opera characters. His depiction of them is not, like his depiction of the criminals, penetrated by his intelligence. He fails, in other words, to fill out his vision of American life, because he fails to be sufficiently ironical—if for the sake of journalistic impartiality, then journalism has here interfered with comprehensiveness.

Another such failure of irony is in the fact that the psychiatrist's report at the trial is given as entirely adequate to the case, whereas in any good novel, there ought to be an ironic disparity between such an analysis and the living mystery of the characters. Perry Smith is finally enigmatic. Yet Mr. Capote announces without reservation that the report confirms Perry's own analysis of his motives—an analysis showing only that Perry was intelligent enough to have picked up the sociopsychological point of view. The Clutters "never hurt me. Like other people," he said. "Like people have all my life. Maybe it's just that the Clutters were the ones who had to pay for it."

The scene in which Perry says this is conspicuously artful. Playwrights and novelists often introduce a new, somewhat mysterious character near the end; and sure enough, a man whom Perry hardly remembers from the army writes him in prison, saying he is a devout Catholic and wants to help him. The holy stranger visits Perry during the trial; but the scene, set for moral and religious discussion, comes to nothing

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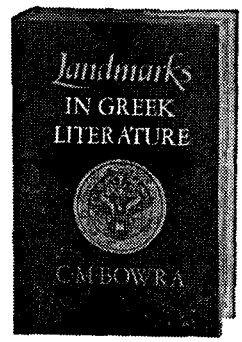

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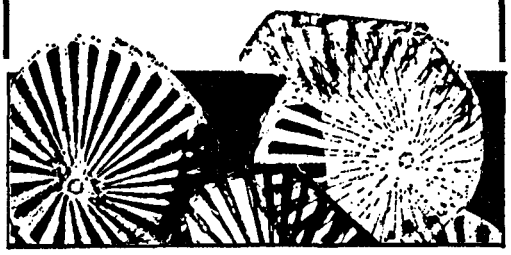

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because Perry is precisely not sorry. "I don't feel anything about it. I wish I did. . . . It's easy to kill—a lot easier than passing a bad check."

Even more ironic and profound is the scene where Perry, when he returns to his cell after the death sentence, shows quite another side of his nature. The undersheriff's wife, who had been taking care of Perry and had come to like him, heard him crying like a child and went to his cell. "He reached out his hand. He wanted me to hold his hand, and I did, I held his hand, and all he said was, 'I'm embraced by shame.'" Just that night, unfortunately, when Perry reached out for human contact, she and her husband, who seldom went out, had an engagement. Perry had reached out that way before in his life and been rebuffed—most notably when he followed his father to Alaska and the relation he had banked on so much ended with a tremendous scene, epic in its emotional range, in which they almost killed each other.

In Mr. Capote's short story, "The Headless Hawk," the hero recalls his childhood attraction to carnival freaks and realizes "that about those whom he'd loved there was always a little something wrong, broken." It is that sensibility in the author that makes the characterization of Perry the triumph of this book. For Perry is irresistibly attractive, with his talent for music and drawing, his fine feeling for words, his gentleness—he prevented Dick from raping the Clutter daughter and made the Clutters as comfortable as he could after he tied them up. Yet he is not sentimentalized; for the gentleness makes the murderousness all the zanier. We are never allowed to forget that he is a child-man, a freak.

Mr. Capote said in the *Times* interview that he wanted to achieve with nonfiction "the poetic altitude fiction is capable of reaching." He achieves such altitude in the characterization of Bonnie—the one Clutter who is "broken"—as a ghost. In life, she was always cold and she feared her children would remember her "as a kind of ghost." After her death, the detective's wife saw her in a dream, crying, "To be murdered. No. No. There's nothing worse. Nothing

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worse than that. Nothing." Real speech is made to yield that much poetry because it has been prepared for by a carefully arranged pattern of imagery. Mr. Capote works like those *avant-garde* moviemakers who turn real-life shots into art in the cutting room.

The highest altitude is reached in Perry's dream in the death house. All his life Perry had dreamed of a snake that would fall upon him out of a diamond-laden but foul-smelling jungle tree, and of a towering yellow, a sunlike, parrot that would wing him to paradise. Once in the death house he woke up shouting, "The bird is Jesus." And then, in this climatic dream, he sees himself in his favorite guise as the entertainer Perry O'Parsons, tap-dancing up a short flight of gold-painted prop steps. But when he takes his bow at the top, the strange audience, mostly men and Negroes, do not applaud.

Staring at them, the perspiring entertainer at last understood their silence, for suddenly he knew that these were phantoms, the ghosts of the legally annihilated, the hanged, the gassed, the electrocuted—and in the same instant he realized that he was there to join them, that the gold-painted steps had led to a scaffold, that the platform on which he stood was opening beneath him. His top hat tumbled; urinating, defecating, Perry O'Parsons entered eternity.

Here, through a powerfully ironic comprehension of the whole of Perry's psychic life, Mr. Capote has achieved a genuinely literary moment. One is reminded of the end of Browning's dream poem "Childe Roland," and of Bloom's dream apotheosis in *Ulysses*.

And yet the penetration here is at odds with the flatness of the other characters. The insight into Perry does not contribute to any general vision; and the book rather loses literary magic and turns into journalism after the hallucinated events leading up to the murder and the capture of the criminals. Here, as in his symbolist fiction, Mr. Capote fails to understand all the implications of the imagery he sets in motion (his best stories are the sentimental come-

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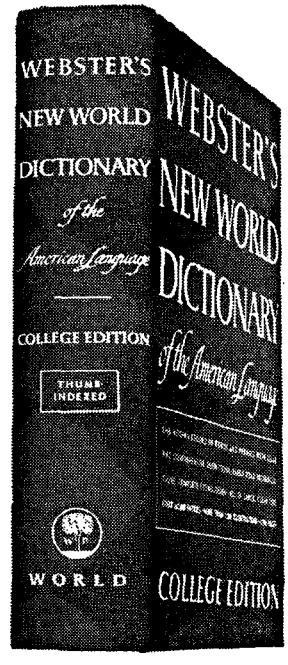

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dies, like *House of Flowers* and *Breakfast at Tiffany's,* which stick frankly to the surface). This limitation makes him a lightweight, although a sophisticated craftsman, a "pro" in the best sense of the word. The implications of *In Cold Blood* are so frightening that more rigor would undoubtedly have made the book less entertaining. As it stands, *In Cold Blood* is first-rate entertainment that at moments gives illusory promise of being something more than that.

Ideas and Facts

AMERICAN WOMEN. *Edited by Margaret Mead and Frances Balgley Kaplan. Scribner's. $6.95.*

THE WOMAN IN AMERICA. *Edited by Robert Jay Lifton. Houghton Mifflin. $6.*

ACADEMIC WOMEN. *By Jessie Bernard. The Pennsylvania State University Press. $6.50.*

THE BETTER HALF: The Emancipation of the American Woman. *By Andrew Sinclair. Harper & Row. $6.95.*

Reviewed by IRVING DILLIARD

College and university admissions officers had better look over their handiwork for the coming academic year. Have they discriminated against young women in the acceptance of applications for entrance? If so, they may very well find their discriminatory practices cited as the basis for withholding Federal funds from their institutions.

This is not speculation. Congresswoman Edith Green of Oregon, who is chairman of the House Subcommittee on Education, is embarked on a program of scrutiny of coeducational institutions of advanced education. She has resolved not to wait for complaints to float in against discrimination on the grounds of sex. She is going out where the complaints are. A hint to the alert ought to be enough. Anyone who knows Edith Green's record knows that when she sounds a warning she means business.

Such a hint has not been enough in the past with respect to discrimination against women. Anyone who wants to have some idea of what it has been like should ask his public library to get these four books and then list himself—or herself—as the prospective first reader in the local community.

American Women, edited by Margaret Mead and Frances Balgley Kaplan, assembles in its entirety the Report of the President's Commission on the Status of Women. The purpose of that Commission, appointed by the late President Kennedy and headed by that sterling leader of women, Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, was to advance the cause of women's basic rights as a requisite to realization of the potential of women in American life. Already a majority as our population approaches two hundred million, and the majority owners of our industry and corporate enterprise, women can and would do much more to enhance American society at all levels and in all ranks—if only they enjoyed free and equal status.

The component studies of the sections of this Commission are full of valuable and useful information previously assembled nowhere else. For example, in discussing education, the Commission recommends school counseling, vocational guidance work in or out of school and related work in community mental health centers as "jobs that could be filled by educated women of talent and sensitivity who have raised families and who are willing to return to school to train for a second career."

The basic conclusions are that America needs skilled womanpower, that the climate of opinion is turning against the idea that homemaking is the only form of feminine achievement, that the pendulum must not swing far enough to force out of the home women whose major creative life is grounded in motherhood and wifehood, and finally that "women can only be given real opportunity by being offered real choices, each one underwritten by fair laws and fair practices and a social climate that

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✪ IRVING DILLIARD is Ferris Professor of Journalism at Princton University and Trustee of the University of Illinois.

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ensure that each life pattern will be considered a feasible and dignified one."

Jessie Bernard's study of academic women is far and away the fullest compilation of information on the status of women at colleges and universities in the United States. She shows the role of women in education from the time of Aspasia, credited with having taught rhetoric to Socrates, through the services of American leaders like Maria Sanford, Alice Freeman Palmer, M. Carey Thomas, Vida Scudder, Florence Sabin and Ruth Benedict. There are, of course, other women who have won their way in the academic world: Marjorie Hope Nicolson, Alice Hamilton, Adrienne Koch and Helen White, to mention only four. But by and large it has been a man's world and still is.

If there are those who think otherwise, then hear this testimony of Ben Euwema, Dr. Bernard's sympathetic and understanding dean for seventeen years. For he writes in the Foreword to her volume:

> Despite the findings here reported, the career [academic] woman does still suffer from discrimination: certain departments will hire no women at all; others will not promote women to higher academic posts; and most departments have a strong prejudice against female administrators.

Noting that "academic woman" is unusually free of "the crusading spirit," Dean Euwema says that, as the result of three decades in academic administrative work, he believes that a degree of "intelligent crusading definitely is in order."

Dr. Bernard's tables and appendices will provide ample material for such crusading. Why don't women insist on their just desserts in academe, as a starter? The field is wide open and ready for a shake up.

The Woman in America, edited by Robert Jay Lifton, Yale psychiatrist, brings into book form a series of provocative papers first presented at the Dædalus Conference on Woman under the auspices of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, then for the most part printed in an issue of the magazine *Dædalus.* As a book, the dozen essays make up the third publication of the new Dædalus Library of works

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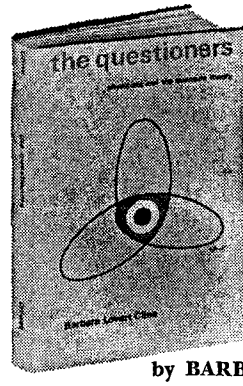

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concerned with significant aspects of the humanities, sciences and social sciences.

The contributions range from the editor's own study of "Woman as Knower," in which he checks Japanese and Chinese women against American to "explore patterns common to all women," to a fact-filled report on "Working Women," by Esther Peterson, Assistant Secretary of Labor, appointed in 1961, and now the exceedingly helpful Special Assistant to President Johnson for Consumer Affairs. She was executive vice-chairman of President Kennedy's Commission on the Status of Women.

Esther Peterson's paper gives needed attention to the Negro woman in the United States and shows that it is often easier for her than for her husband to obtain work. She notes that the Negro wife often earns more than her husband and that too often she is the only wage earner in the family. A most hopeful part of her report is the evidence of greatly increased interest in education on the part of Negroes. In 1950 only twenty-six percent of the nonwhite population twenty-five years of age and over had attended high school or college as compared to fifty-three percent of the white population. By 1960 the percentage was about forty for nonwhites and sixty for whites.

Alice S. Rossi, research sociologist at the University of Chicago, writing on "Equality Between the Sexes," tells us that any attempt to draw a significant portion of married women into the mainstream of occupational life must involve a reconsideration of the suburban pattern of living. This is because retail stores have suburban branches, but colleges and universities have yet to go into suburbs in large numbers. "A woman can spend in the suburb," says Mrs. Rossi, "but she can neither learn nor earn there."

A high point of the book is a warm, perceptive appreciation of the life and works of Jane Addams, "An American Heroine," by Jill Conway, a native of New South Wales, who came to the United States only in 1960 and before her arrival at Radcliffe College as a graduate student, could hardly have known too much about the founder of Hull House. The author shows the tremendous comprehension of Jane Addams—in local, state and national politics, in education, in labor relations, in public health, in juvenile problems, in law, in social work, in international affairs. She quotes no less an appraiser than William James as saying of Jane Addams that hers was "the most gifted mind" of his generation; she, in his words, "inhabited reality," and in her *being* summed up the experience of the America of the great pragmatist. The young Australian concludes that our need today is for an insight similar to Jane Addams', "reconciling intellect and private life." For as Jill Conway looks about present-day America she finds many new problems concerning women, "unsolved and as yet too little thought about."

The final paper is also a tribute to a great American woman—of our own times. The author, Joan M. Erikson, modestly calls it "Notes on the Life of Eleanor Roosevelt," but it is a model of good writing, selection of fact and opinion and compression. The other authors are Lotte Bailyn, Carl N. Degler, Erik H. Erikson, David C. McClelland, David Riesman, Edna G. Rostow and Diana Trilling.

Andrew Sinclair's book is the broadest of the four. Historical, scholarly, serious, it seeks to describe the often elusive role of woman in our national life and to follow the equal rights movement that has brought her the measure of emancipation that she has now attained. The long and at times violent fight for the ballot is a major theme, but so also are the related struggles for recognition in education, careers and employment. It all adds up to one of the most ungentlemanly aspects of the American story.

These four books assemble ideas as well as facts, experiences along with philosophy, on the American woman, in new dimensions. Taken together they raise up a social and literary milestone of which men as well as women should take thoughtful notice. Has not the time come to eliminate *all* second-class citizenship without regard to race *or* sex?

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The Reader Replies

THE READER REPLIES *carries miscellaneous comments by readers and authors on various articles that have appeared in the magazine. All communications should be addressed to: Editor,* THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, *1811 Q Street, N.W., Washington, D. C. 20009. Because of space limitations we cannot guarantee to print all letters received.*

—EDITOR

Your "Electronic Revolution" issue is the finest stimulus to continuing education I have seen. Please accept my thanks for the intellectual excitement this has generated in my home.

RALPH E. GILES
Continental Oil Company

* * *

Let me express my delight, excitement and wonder at the collection of essays assembled in your Spring, 1966, "Electronic Revolution" issue. I regard this as the most important and stimulating assemblage of ideas that I have encountered in a long time. THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR is continually surpassing itself.

JOANNE REYNOLDS
Brooklyn College

* * *

My compliments on the great special issue, "The Electronic Revolution"—the most thought-provoking book that has come my way since *Understanding Media.*

MARTIN LEDERMAN
New York, New York

* * *

On page 260 of your Spring issue, Professor Herbert Simon speaks of higher levels of productivity and says that the nation "will experience no more difficulty in maintaining substantially full employment than it has during the past decades."

And yet reports of most economists, labor leaders, cyberneticians, *et cetera,* predict an increase in unemployment in the years to come.

JAN REINER
St. Petersburg, Florida

MR. SIMON replies: Mr. Reiner's assertion that "most economists . . . predict an increase in unemployment in the years to come" is simply false. Howard Bowen and Robert Solow, the economist members of the President's Commission on Technology, Automation, and Economic Progress, do *not* predict this, nor do Paul Samuelson and G. L. Bach, authors of two of the leading textbooks, nor Gardner Ackley, James Tobin, or any of the other present or recent past members of the Council of Economic Advisors, nor Milton Friedman and Yale Brozen of Chicago, and so on and on. I know of no group in the profession even faintly comparable to these (quantitatively or qualitatively) who *do* predict this, nor any analyses in the professional journals supporting the unemployment scare. The economists I have named represent a wide spectrum of political opinion.

With respect to labor leaders, I observe that Walter Reuther (auto workers), Joseph Beirne (communications workers), and Albert Hayes (machinists), the three labor members of the President's Commission (whose report debunks the unemployment scare), signed this comment: "We have concurred in this report because we believe that on the whole both its analysis and its recommendations are sound. . . We agree that the problems flowing from technological change during the next decade will not be unsolvable economically."

The reasons why automation does not imply unemployment are stated in the Commission's report, *Technology and the American Economy,* and in my book, *The Shape of Automation* (Harper and Row). Both economic theory and empirical facts point to the same reassuring conclusion.

The real ivory towerists are the handful of self-styled "cyberneticians" who have been noisily sounding the tocsin in total disregard of the facts of employment and economic theory, on both of which the qualified experts are nearly unanimously (*i.e.,* ninety-five percent) agreed.

* * *

I have just finished studying your Spring issue. I shall return to it again. Congratulations! It is illuminating and fascinating reading.

RICHARD TYNER
Department of State

* * *

I find your Spring '66 issue to be one of the most creative pieces of journalism-scholarship to appear in the last few years. You deserve all credit for so widely diffusing ideas that might otherwise have to be gotten at slowly and piecemeal.

MICHAEL BARKUN
Syracuse University

* * *

An editorial tussle no doubt preceded the issue devoted to the whiz kids [AS: Spring, 1966].

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Education is a lifelong endeavor to gain some understanding of the world, and thus attain a measure of control over one's experience in it. Part of the process is to gain knowledge of a material nature; the next step is the more difficult one of gaining knowledge of one's self.

Home of Eta of Pennsylvania, Phi Beta Kappa

But the issue did appear, and you are saddled with their errors. Here are a few:

"Science and technology have evolved rather continuously from early man to modern times." (p. 267) In fact, the technology available around the year 1000 A.D. had been available in prehistoric times.

"The myth of the happy savage survives all the empirical evidence that anthropology can bring . . . against it." (p. 261) Actually, anthropology rose to eminence with a Darwin-inspired myth of the Ignoble Savage redeemed by Evolution. Modern anthropology has been at pains to prove, empirically, that savages can be not only happy but profoundly thoughtful.

". . . man has been getting along in a gradually more favorable way." (p. 211) This is simply wide-eyed faith.

With Junior feeding such stuff into his computer, how can it possibly come up with valid answers? Maybe someone had better program Junior back to school.

RICHARD BAUM
Stonington, Connecticut

* * *

Marshall McLuhan, speaking in his "Address at Vision 65" [AS: Spring, 1966] of technological change in pedagogy, referred to "the tribal encyclopedia" of Greek poetry which, he said, was opposed by Plato because "with writing came the classification of knowledge, the ideas, the categories; and Plato's detestation of the poets was mainly a rivalry with the old educational establishment which had naturally failed to come to grips with the new technology of the written word."

Mr. McLuhan should have consulted the *Phaedrus* (pages 274-279), especially Socrates' tale of Thamus and Theuth which concludes with the observation that "he would be a very simple person, and quite a stranger to the oracles of Thamus or Ammon, who should leave in writing or receive in writing any art under the idea that the written word would be intelligible or certain, or who deemed that writing was at all better than knowledge and recollection of the same matters." Writing is no substitute for "the living word of knowledge which has a soul, and of which the written word is properly no more than an image. . . . Only in principles of justice and goodness and nobility taught and communicated orally for the sake of instruction and graven in the soul, which is the true way of writing, is there clearness and perfection and seriousness." Furthermore, the dialogue establishes not only that writing is a deficient mode of instruction, but also that it is the tool of mere poets!

Perhaps Mr. McLuhan's assertion was an example of the kind of thinking which comes from our advance "into the world of pattern recognition, out of the world of mere data classification." But mere data classification, not to mention mere data, must precede "pattern recognition" if the pattern is supposed to refer to any reality beyond itself. Presumably, people occupied with "programming for the sensory life of entire populations" will take this annoying fact into consideration. Meanwhile, we are left with one more thought from that same passage of the *Phaedrus*: "Until a man knows the truth of the several particulars of which he is writing or speaking . . . , he will be unable to handle arguments according to the rules of art, as far as their nature allows them to be subjected to art, either for the purpose of teaching or persuading." Mr. McLuhan's talk was as persuasive as it was instructive.

DENTLEY HAUGESAG
Minneapolis, Minnesota

* * *

Your Spring, 1966, issue on "The Electronic Revolution" is magnificent. Congratulations!

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